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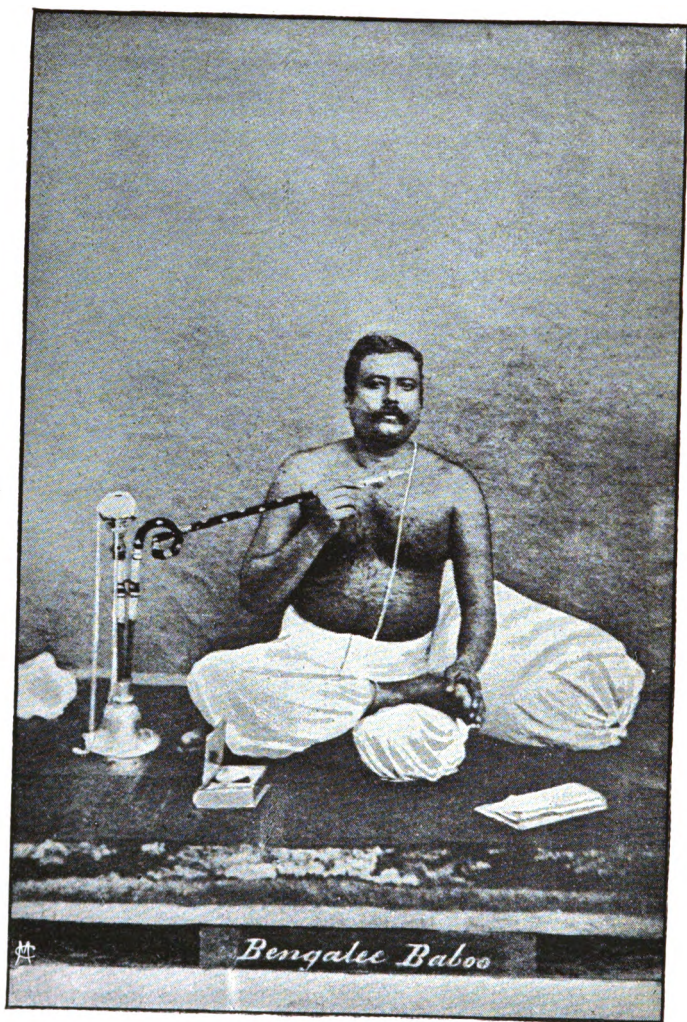
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Jottings and Recollections
OF A
Bengal “ Qui Hye ! ”



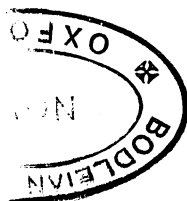
JOTTINGS
AND
RECOLLECTIONS
OF A
BENGAL "QUI HYE!"

BY
LOUIS EMANUEL.



LONDON:
JAMES BLACKWOOD & CO., LOVELL'S COURT,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

247/183. 3.3



Dedicated,
BY PERMISSION,
TO
THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LYTTON,
G.C.B., G.C.S.I., C.I.E., ETC., ETC.,
Late Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

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JOTTINGS & RECOLLECTIONS

OF A

BENGAL “QUI HYE!”

CHAPTER I.

“QUI, HYE!”

THESE jottings of Indian Society are the result of many years residence, experience, and intimate connection, with a considerable part of British India.

They will include mention of many places, sketches of various character, and will give some idea of how we really live, “carry on,” govern, work, and amuse ourselves in our far-away grand Indian territory. Though perhaps rough, they will be truthful, and 'tis hoped, somewhat graphic pictures, of the many ever-varying, different Anglo-Indian classes: from the proud, self-contained aristocratic and bureaucratic *haut-en-bas* official, “Burrah Sahib,”—down to the lowest in *Jât* (caste) and poorest of the *Kulà-Adamee* (Native, but literally translated, “Black people”). In short, they are inten-

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ded to be a familiar, chatty sort of *resumé*, of the many phases of character, peculiar manners, quaint and strange customs; so continuously met with in that enormous Continent of Hindustan; so vast in its important interests, but yet so very little known or appreciated by the majority of English people.

“*Qui Hye?*” literally, “Who’s there?” or “Is any one here?” is an exclamation so continually used in the Hindoostanee vernacular all over the Bengal Presidency; as to have gained for Bengalees generally, whether European, Anglo-Indian (“half-caste”) or Native, the soubriquet of “Qui-Hye’s!” If anything is wanted, “Qui-hye?” is the inevitable and invariable exclamation, and “Qui-hye” is therefore called and shouted everywhere, and by everyone, in Bengal. In fact, it is a term that will always be readily and pleasingly recognised by every old “Indian.” In Bombay and Madras, the sister Presidencies, where happily there is not that peculiar caste prejudice among the natives, which is so rife of all sorts of mischief and obstructiveness in Bengal, fewer servants are kept; instead of “Qui-hye,” they merely call “Bhoy!” or “Boy!” hailing the *one* servant in ordinary attendance in those Presidencies; and not—as in Bengal—one of a troop of the lounging, lazy, sleepy-headed fellows, every-

one is obliged to maintain there. Thus, in Calcutta, Barrackpore, Burdwán, Allahabád, or other principal stations; the grand, luxuriously indolent "*Burrah Mém*" (great Lady) reclining on her spring-couch, with the heavy fringed *Punkah* waving over her; softly and languidly exclaims, with the least possible exertion, "Qui-hye!" to bring in one of the *Nokurs* (servants), who are always in close attendance, just outside the *Purdah* (door-curtain) of her room; or in the verandah, where they sit or squat on their heels on the ground, in the manner peculiar to East Indian natives.

Well, the *Burrah-Mém*, or Ladye-Sahib's "Qui-hye?" brings in a grand, important, and most often, venerable looking *Baira* (body servant) or *Chuprassee* (messenger), arrayed in whitest of flowing robes; whose *Kummerbund* (belt) and *Puggaree* (turban) are more or less embroidered and edged with gold lace; while, if he is a *Nokur* of any high class Government or prominent official, he has also a gold or gilt-hilted dagger, with sheath of crimson velvet mounted in gold, conspicuously shown in his belt. This grand-looking person, generally with a long white beard, comes quietly in, his bare feet hardly sounding on the polished teak wood flooring; and who, bending lowly—nay, almost reverently—*salaams*,

with bowed head and hands upraised and clasped, as if praying, humbly and with "bated breath," craves to know the wishes or commands of "Burrah-Mém." Most probably she would only want him, Peer-Khan, to tell Emam-Buxsh, to order Ràmzàdà *Coachwàn* (coachman) to have the *Gharree* (carriage), with the "*dhonà Kàlà mudwhan*" (two black mares) ready, by "*sàrà chau bujjà*" (half-past six o'clock) for the "*howà Khànnà* (drive) on the Strand or Mall. The literal meaning of *howà Khànnà* is, "eating the wind!" Then again, the young Griff, as Johnny Newcomes are often called, military "sub," or newly-fledged member of the B. C. S. (Bengal Civil Service), which, in spite of "*competition-wallahs*," and stray admission of the U.B.C.S. (*uncovenanted* service), is still highly exclusive and autocratic, if not aristocratic; who, laying prone on his *charpoy* (low painted wood couch) in a scantily furnished room, with Indian matting on the white smooth *chunam* (cement) floor, darkened by closed *jilmils* (venetian blinds), and made comparatively cool by the swinging *Punkah* and *Kus-kus tatties*—a sort of grass matting, hung over the open windows and doors, and kept continually wet by an attendant *Bheestie* (water-carrier);—shouts loudly "Qui-hye!" for his *Kahnsàmà* or *Kitmitgà* (table servants), or even *Bairà* (valet) to bring

him a "peg" of "Bràndee pànee" (brandy and water); or if, as probably he is, very "seedy," he will call out "*bràndee srob*, oure belàtee paunee" (brandy and soda), in fact the "B and S," that late euphonious addition to our home vernacular. Or, perhaps, the great powerful and princely merchant of Skardine, Jinner & Co., or Kinny, Bolvin and Co., with his Assistant—not clerk—that would hardly be consistent with the tone, social position, and lofty aspirations of the young scion of influential families at home, who condescends to do, what he calls, "office work" for a few years, until admitted to a partnership. These grand gentlemen, as usual, exclaim, "Qui-hye?" for the obsequious *salaam-ing Dufturee* (office attendant), who is told to order "that d——d nigger to pull the Punkà stronger," or if "up" in the rather strong-flavoured, and certainly most uncomplimentary vernacular, they would shout out, "bolo oosku pàjee punkà wàllà, lumbà hât setàno," which is literally, "tell that beast of a punkah fellow to pull with a long arm!"

During this colloquy, poor Looftàlla, Abdalla, or Noor Mahomed, as the case may be, the said Punkah-coolie, out of sight, but who has heard every word of the Burrah Sahib's behind the inevitable Purdà, or in the Verandà; is comfortably squatting in the normal Native

fashion, and pulling the Punkà rope with anything but praiseworthy vigour. Rather, indeed, is he taking it very easy and most nonchalantly. Lazily and languidly, he hardly pulls the *russee* (rope) at all, and that with one hand only; while with its unoccupied fellow, he amuses and pleasantly refreshes himself by filling his mouth with parched “dhàll” (a native grain).

Apropos of Punkà Coolies—of whom more in another number—though these useful members of an East-Indian *ménage*, do still occasionally come to grief, now and then obtaining some slight souvenirs of the Sahib’s affections; they are now certainly spared, to a great extent, the stronger demonstrations formerly indulged in by the Sahibs, and—let it be whispered, *entre-nous vous comprenez*—sometimes in those dark Anglo-Indian ages, by even the “Lady-Sahibs.” Those *striking* features of former power and custom, are now laudably curbed, by dread of *exposé*, to say nothing of fines and costs in Small Cause or Magisterial Courts. And yet, even now, our dingy and not over-industrious friends, Peeroo, Meero, or Azim Khàn, the Punkah-wallahs, do sometimes come in for, well, perhaps a little, though strong, reprobatory language, accompanied now and again with *forcible* hints as to the advisability of *really* pulling the

Punkà. Seriously, their best wishers must confess that they are often very trying to one's equanimity.

Now, I mean to say, that given the ordinary state of temperature in Bengal, with thermometer averaging 85° to 90° Far. in the coolest part of your house or bungalow, as it is called in the Mofussil (up-country); 'tis certainly trying to the temper of the most quiet and amiable poor devil of a half-grilled "Johnny Newcome," "Griff," or even indeed an acclimatized, sun-burnt, yellow-brown old Indian, to be left bathed in perspiration actually oozing out of every pore, especially fingers and wrists; when, if occupied in writing, it is certainly rather detrimental to one's clear correspondence. I repeat, 'tis, to say the least, trying to one's temper, to be neglected like this; while Meeroo, the Punkà Coolie, is engaged in the combined amusement of sleeping and snoring on his mat, or, perhaps, coolly preparing his "*pàn*" (a mixture of the *betel*-nut and lime, chewed by all classes of natives), and, if very luxuriously disposed, calmly refreshing himself with whiffs from his primitive "hubble-bubble" (common native hookah.) For remember, *he* don't care, *he* don't feel too warm. He also gets any breeze there is in the varandah. And lastly, he is paid so much "*tullub*" (wages) for pulling the Punkà,

and therefore takes remarkably good care to *pull* as little as he possibly can. So, it does therefore occasionally happen that the Sahib's, or Lady Mém-Sahib's "Qui-hye?" or "*Keeyà kurthà toom soostee pàjee soor*" ("What are you doing, ye lazy brute of a pig?") sometimes wakens up Meeroo, or Furheed, in more ways than one. There have been times, indeed, when he has been "woke up" without any premonitory "Qui-hye?" but with something perhaps more weighty than the Sybarite's rose-leaf, or a gentle tap from a lady's fan. Such things *have* been, but are not *now*, publicly known. "Qui-Hye" himself thinks he can remember examples of a delinquent Punkà-cooly being most powerfully impressed with the danger of neglecting to "*lumbà hât se-tàno*," pull with a *long* arm.

CHAPTER II.

CALCUTTA "ADJUTANTS" AND "CORWAS." WITH
REMINISCENCES OF THE SIEGE OF MOOLTAN AND
BATTLE OF GOOJERAT.

THOUGH "Qui Hye" opens this "Jotting" with such an orderly-room sort of heading; he has no intention of giving any detail of regimental parades, "goose-step," recruit, or "punishment" drill:—or in fact, of entering on any of the ordinary adjutant's various and multifarious duties, connected as they are, with all and everyone in the Regiment, from the autocratic Commanding Officer, down to the last joined Junior Ensign or "Sub. Lieut.," as he is now; and from that all important grand Serjeant-Major, to the youngest slip of a bugler, trumpeter or drummer.—For truly, whether in a Cavalry or Infantry corps, Battalion of foot, Squadron of horse, or Battery of Artillery, the work and duties of the Adjutant never ceases; little time being left him for pleasure or recreation.

"Qui Hye" knows this from hard bought personal experience. His former semi-military position gave him many interesting, though often painful acquaintance, with the different phases of military life in India.—No! 'tis of

quite another sort of "Adjutant" the heading of this Jotting alludes to. But Ah!—how this brings back recollections of many events, now almost consigned to oblivion—the nearly forgotten Punjab Campaign of 1848-9!—How bright and vivid are "Qui Hye's" remembrances of the Siege of Mooltan!—How clearly he still sees that old grymy, grim-looking "mud" wall fort. And after its surrender, how we took the rebel Commander, with his bright flowing crimson silk *Puggaree*, the brave though cruel Dewan Moolraj!—"Qui Hye" still distinctly hears that tremendous ear-splitting explosion; the fortunate "fluke" of a Bengal Artilleryman, who with his chance shot hastened the end of the Siege, by blowing up Moolraj's largest powder-magazine. How like yesterday it seems!—that eager excitement of our first "advance" on the outer entrenchments, and the death of Major Gordon at the head of the gallant 60th Rifles. This brave but rash officer would head the "dear old Rifles," mounted on his showy white charger. The result was:—he was deliberately "potted." A grizzly, grey, savage-looking Beloochie brought him down, with a shot from his long and heavy worm-eaten "match-lock," called a "Jingall," and which he fired from a rest on the walls. The old warrior's evident exultation at having shot the "Burrah Colonel

Sahib " of the famous and dreaded " Rifle Ke-Pultàn," was soon ended by Betts, one of the best shots of the 60th, who neatly tumbled him over, and ever after was glorified as the avenger of poor Major Gordon. Then the monotonous thudding and deafening din of the heavy " Siege Guns."—The rasping roar and hissing flight of those—particularly at night—brilliant looking, but destructive shells.—Our Artillery certainly went to work *con-amore*. Their "practice" was splendid and soon crumbled the walls into "cocked hats!"—The highest military judges, have, in speaking of the old Indian Artillery, declared them to have been unsurpassed. With every fine quality of the highest class of Artillery, they were most admirable in their brilliant, lightning-like movements in the field, where their galloping into action—their splendid riding, taking the guns over everything, "over hill, over dale," and over *nullah*, was simply the perfection of Horse Artillery ; and proved them to be perhaps the finest and most dashing and brilliant horsemen in the world. Then the steadiness and precision of the Indian Siege Batterys was most excellent. Those "breaching" guns in the trenches at Mooltan were indeed at it day and night. 'Twas never ceasing. Then there's the reminiscences of the capture—after hard fighting—bit by bit, of the

many strong, though only "mud" walls and outworks. And at last came the day of Moolraj's surrender, the marching in of our Troops, the "Loot," and the view of the blackened ruins, crumbled and fallen, of that den of murderous ruffians. Again, to think of the brave fellows, who in those dark, eventful and hazardous days, were the saviours of Upper India and Scinde.—What a noble, glorious list. At the head stands Vans Agnew, the Political Resident, who with his Assistant, young Lieut. Anderson, were the first victims to fall fighting bravely against fearful odds, at the commencement of the treacherous outbreak.

Then we have the grand, self reliant, far-seeing Herbert Edwardes! He was only a Lieutenant of a Bombay regiment then, but soon proved himself a very hero!—He it was, who, after the murder of the Resident, with a mere handful of hastily levied raw native recruits, supported by small detachments of Infantry, held in check this festering hot-bed of rebellion and murder until reinforcements could arrive from Bombay and Bengal. This be it remembered took some months, long weary months then. There were no railroads, no telegraphs! No,—Edwardes was alone, far away from any chance of immediate help. With little or nothing but himself and his

never-fearing, never-failing resources of indomitable bravery, keen and true knowledge of all the many shades of native character ; and the long practical experience he had of their bitter, carking jealousies and rivalries, so admirably and effectively used, and played off by him, against each other. Next to Edwardes, at this important juncture, we had the sturdy, fine portly soldier ; part Dutchman, part Englishman, with a *soupgon* of the East-Indian, the brave Van Cortland. And amongst these heroes of the Punjaub we had the chivalresque deadly swordsman, Neville Chamberlayne ; the clever and politic George Lawrence, the Resident of Peshawur, who twice a prisoner to the Sikhs, was only finally released at the end of the Campaign.

George Lawrence, now Sir George St. Patrick Lawrence, is one of those great and celebrated brothers who have done such great and noble deeds in India. Sir Henry, the the eldest, was killed defending Lucknow in the Mutiny. John, now Lord Lawrence, on the death of Earl Elgin, was one of the most efficient and popular Governor-Generals and Viceroys of India. Then there's the fierce old Highlander, Lord Clyde, better known as Sir Colin Campbell : the noble James Outram, truly the *preux chevalier*, the *Bayard* of the Indian Army, *sans peur et sans reproche* ;

General Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, the commander of the Bombay Force ; Colonel Bradshaw, commanding 1st Batalion 60th Rifles, who, though home on sick leave, came out at once from England, making his way with great difficulty and fatigue, through hot and sandy Scinde, riding on that most ungainly and uncomfortable animal, so inaptly called "the Ship of the Desert," a camel. By dint of hard travelling he managed to join us just as we were burying Gordon, who had been commanding in his absence. Colonel Bradshaw, was a splendid officer and fine soldier, and as Brigadier did good service all through the the Campaign. He was a good and kind friend to "Qui Hye," who deeply lamented his death, which occurred at the end of the War, at Kussowlee, one of the Military Stations in the Himalayas. All these, and many more, for their name is "Legion," will ever be remembered by all who prize true bravery, patriotism, and "pluck," that great attribute of the Briton, in every clime and under all circumstances.

Soon after the fall of Mooltan came the shock of the reverse we met to the usual successes of our Army. General Gough, that daringly brave, though somewhat reckless and imprudent Commander, with his wild, hot Irish blood and "*Faugh-a-ballagh*" war cry,

had thought so little of Shere Sing and his really spirited Sikhs, that through the merest rashness and contempt of the foe, he had unhappily received a serious repulse, if indeed it might not be deemed a defeat, at Chillianwalla. This mishap caused the whole of India to throb with excitement. 'Twas at Chillianwalla that the 24th Regiment was almost cut to pieces. It lost more than two-thirds of its strength! Colonel Pennycuick and his young son were killed side by side, falling at last on each other. Nearly every officer was killed or wounded. A Junior Lieutenant found himself the *Senior and Commanding Officer* of the Regiment. So we of the Bombay Column had to march "*Juldie-eck-dum*" (quick at once) to reinforce the brave but rash warrior "Old Gough" as our Rifles called him, and who, wonderful to say, was waiting in the entrenchments he had now made, *patiently* or *impatiently*, for us. After some long and most fatiguing heavy marches, we came up to his Camp near Goojerat. A day or two later the combined forces gained a great and decisive victory there. This Battle entirely broke up the proud and daring Sikh Confederacy, which was then seriously threatening our supremacy in Upper India. So confident had the brief success at Chillianwalla made our swarthy foes, who reckoned on beating us easily, that

“throwing caution to the winds,” they left the cover and protection of their entrenchments, and with their Tents and Camp Standing, out they came to the front, with the greatest daring to meet us.

Gough had now learned caution. He would have no hasty advance of Infantry ; no charge of Cavalry ; though all down the magnificent line of Native and European Regular and Irregular Cavalry and Infantry, extending to nearly four miles, the men were chafing and fretting to be “up, and at ’em.” But, no ! determined to win this time, he gave no chance away. “Pounding” the Sikhs at a range beyond that of their inferior, though well-served Guns, he only slowly but surely advanced our line as theirs retired from the *feu d’enfer* of our noble Artillery. So, after some good and plucky firing from them, though nearly all too short of range, and one or two rushes and bursts of their showy, dashing cavalry, they began to waver, then to break.

Now came Gough’s time ! He “slipped the dogs of War” at them, with a vengeance ! Off went the Rifles “at the double,” with the “Dirty Shirts,”* and the “Ducks ;”* H. M. 32nd, 75th, and other fine Regiments, shouting and cheering as British Soldiers can and

* “Dirty Shirts,” a nick-name of the old Bengal European Regiment, now the 101st Regiment of the Line. “Ducks,” the Bombay Fusiliers, now the 102nd.

will do when allowed to "go in" for the enemy. At the same time our fine Cavalry, Bengal Lancers, Bombay Irregulars, 14th Dragoons, 9th Lancers, with other Royal and Native Regiments, dashed out on the wavering and breaking lines of Sikhs, with their flashing Lances and swords, with lightning-like speed and brilliant charges. Soon *we* came up to their abandoned Guns; their killed and wounded. These lay in heaps, writhing and struggling in their blood, on the hot, fine sand, with the fierce mid-day Indian sun, burning and blazing over them. Poor wretches! 'Twas pitiful to see. They had been shot down chiefly at the guns, which truly they had worked well and bravely. "Qui Hye" being a "non-combatant," moving up in the rear of the ever advancing 60th Rifles, with the Surgeons and Medical Staff; he had ample time to note the fatal, crushing effect of our terrible cannonade. These Sikh Artillerymen looked well and soldier-like in their uniforms of dark blue with red facings. Their marked handsome features and fine, though rather slim figures. How terrible was it to hear the hoarse cry of the wounded, who lay about, for "Pànee," (water) to slake their parched lips and throats. So cruel are all Natives, whether Hindoo or Mahomedan, that though our Regimental "Bheesties" (water carriers)

passed with their filled "mussacks" (skins of water) a few steps only from the poor wounded creatures, not a drop would *they* give, until we forced them to do so. Some of these unhappy wretches, victims of human ambition and fierce passions, were so perfectly hopeless, so despairing, in their pain and misery, that they often cried out to us, "Amko màro—àmerà gullah kot ko," ("Kill me, cut my throat!") suiting the action to the words by drawing their hand across their necks. Some of the dead were hideously disfigured. At first, our good and kind doctors, Boyes and Macfarlane of the 60th, had some of them—our wounded enemies—taken up and attended to. Soon however this was impossible. "Qui Hye" was young then and unused to see such human misery. He can but too well remember the deadly sickening sensation he experienced at first seeing the wounded at Mooltan. Our Cavalry and Horse Artillery kept up the pursuit of the routed flying Sikhs, till sun-down. On their recall a "flying column" of Rifles, Light Infantry, Cavalry and Horse Artillery was formed, and which, marching at daybreak, closely followed the retreating Sikhs; never allowing them to reorganise, or even to rally their scattered and demoralised forces. Thus we chased them over the "*Five Rivers*" of the Punjuab, from which the name of

the Province is derived:—"Punj" or "Pànch" being Hindostanee for "Five," "Juab" for "River." So over the Beas, the Sutlej, the Jhelum, the Ravee and the Chenab Rivers, we hunted them. *Apropos* of crossing these rivers, some of them we forded on foot. Our men, and many of the Officers, took off their trousers, and thus equipped in Highlander fashion, they marched arm in arm to strengthen and preserve their footing, which, the ground or bed of the rivers being formed of small round, pebbly stones, with a swift, powerful current almost carrying us off our legs, was anything but pleasant. Indeed, this fording the Punjaub Rivers, fully breast high, and so fearfully rapid, was so dangerous; that to fall or even stumble was often fatal. Many Native Soldiers and Camp followers met a watery death there. Happily no such casualty occurred among our strong and jolly Rifles, who indeed seem to think it "*a precious good lark!*" "Qui Hye" well remembers crossing with his arms firmly interlocked with those of McBean, the tall and hardy old Scotch Hospital Sergeant of the 60th. "Haud up, Sir!" he cried, "and tak' a guid grip o' me." "Qui Hye" did not neglect the caution, and crossed over safely, though not without a skeery stumble or two. Mounting his horse on the other side, he was

riding quietly along when Major Bingham—Lord Bingham's brother—of "ours," pointing to our naked feet, shouted out cheerily, "I say, Q—, what would they say to see us in Regent Street, like this?" Then through Attock, Rhotas, Peshawur, Jumrood—that ancient and classically famous Battle field of Alexander and Porus—up to near the mouth of the drear Khyber Pass. There we halted and encamped until joined by the main body of the "Punjaub Force," when we took up our position mid-way between Peshawur and the "Pass." So much for the once famous Siege of Mooltan and Battle of Goojerat, events of vast importance then to England and Englishmen, but now nearly forgotten, and their brilliance faded and paled by later, if not greater, glories.

And now, after this episode of the old Punjaub Campaign of 1848-9, we come to our "Calcutta Adjutants," the *Argeelas*, and their impudent, though diminutive *confrères*, the "*Corwás*," Crows.

"Adjutant" is the name given to a large white Stork-like bird, having peculiarly long, thin legs, and almost equally lengthy sharp-pointed bills or beaks. They enjoy the title and position of public scavengers, with the noisy, whelping, whining, and cowardly Pariah dogs. But, unlike them, the "Adjutant" is

anything but noisy. He is large, quietly reserved, and grave of aspect. They are mostly seen in the " Rains." That is their harvest time. All offal, refuse of any kind, decayed animal or vegetable matter, is their food. They are generally protected by all classes. The Natives, indeed, not only will not injure them, but will prevent others from doing so. In the morning in Calcutta, large numbers of these grave, deliberate-looking birds may be seen on the large, prominent dome of Government House, on on the fine portico of the adjacent Town hall. There, and on other elevated places, they assemble and present a respectable and contemplative, though, it must be confessed, a somewhat grotesque appearance. But when they descend to the footways, they lose much of the importance lent to them by their elevation and almost statuesque quietude. In truth, their walk, being a shambling sort of shuffle, is anything but dignified. They may be seen in the early morning stalking about, looking awkward and ungainly, and provoking some fear among " Griffs " and strangers, as to the result of their turning bellicose and attacking with their long, bayonet-looking beak. *L'on dit*, that " Adjutants " have been known to attack and wound young Native children, who, playing heedlessly, did not get out of their way. This, however, should be

taken *cum grano salis*, and not *au pied de la lettre*. Calcutta is especially favoured by these large quiet birds, who under former lax sanitary regulation,—all altered now—were doubtless useful in their way.

There is though in Calcutta—and indeed all over India, for the matter of that—another smaller member of the scavenger corps, who is active and impudent as the *Argeelà* is quiet and grave, chattering and “cawing” as the other is silent; mischievous and restless as the *Adjutant* is indifferent and motionless. In fact, even in colour, they are the perfect antithesis of each other. 'Tis of *Monsieur Le Corbeau*, the Calcutta crow, we speak. This insolent, noisy bird is of a jet black hue; the *Argeelà* is white. The crow is small, though plump and sleek; the “*Adjutant*” is large, long and thin. Then the *Cowà* has a very imperfect, if any, knowledge of, or respect for *meum* and *teum*. In fact, he is a confirmed, hardened and shameless thief! Half a dozen or so of them will perch or hop about on the rail of the verandah, overlooking your breakfast table. There they'll be croaking their “*caw, caw, caw,*” until you are nearly stunned and maddened by the continual noisy, hoarse cry. The *Bairà* or *Kahnsàmà* will hunt them off with their flapping napkins. They go away—not too hurriedly, though—but back again they

hop and perch, cawing and croaking, the instant the Nokurs turn their backs. They even impudently hop and jump on to the floor of the verandah, the edge of the door-like window; and the most bold, inside the room itself. Then, should the table be left for an instant, the little *Kàlà Cowà* (Black Crow) will actively hop up, and—away goes anything most handy. "All's grist that comes to their mill." As for that though, all Italian Opera lovers remember Rossini's "*Gazza Ladra*," literally, "thieving Magpie," proving that *Cowàs* or Crows, Magpies or "*Gazzas*," and all of that ilk, are pretty well tarred with the same brush. It has been said indeed—of course by very rude people—that, as regards the lack of any undue bashfulness, the Calcutta *Cowàs* and the Calcutta Lawyers have some affinitive proclivities. But this I hold as a mere libel. 'Tis certain, however, that the "*Cowà*" is a very shameless and most immoral bird; while, on the contrary, those hardworking, zealous and never tiring Officers of the Army, the Regimental or Battalion Adjutants, can never have any reason to be scandalised by their namesakes, the grave, sober-looking, watchful birds, who by their rigid attention and adherence to their generally elevated posts, might more justly be called Sentries, or Pickets, than "Adjutants."

CHAPTER III.

THE MUTINY! "PANIC SUNDAY" IN CALCUTTA.
1857.

THERE had been whisperings, mutterings, warnings. All sorts of "Gup"—reports, had been going about. At Barrackpore the sepoy had been heard grumbling, saying that the *Sahib-logue* wanted to destroy their *Jât* (caste), by making them use cartridges greased with the fat of swine. It must be remembered that everything and anything connected with the Pig is an utter abomination to all Hindoos, and in not much less a degree is it distasteful to the Mussulman or Mahomedan Natives. Fanatical *Fakheers*—Hindoo mendicant impostors, calling themselves Priests, a most dangerous, daring, and unscrupulous class of Natives, always ripe for robbery, plotting, and mischief of the worst kind,—had been seen skulking about. Many of the domestics and lower class of artisans became suddenly more familiar, less respectful, sometimes insolent. Here and there one would hear that the "Company's" *raj* (reign or power) would soon come to an end. 'Twas near the time of the centenary of Clive's great Battle of Plassy, 1757.



"THAKOORS."—FORMERLY RULERS OF HINDOOSTAN, AND CLAIM DESCENT
FROM THE SUN AND MOON.

Some remembered, or pretended to remember a prophecy, that at the end of a hundred years from that event, the pride of the English would be lowered, the power of the great " Company " would end. And so there were many deep though low muttered growlings and rumblings in the political and social horizon. The expedition against China had taken a number of our European Regiments away. There were reports of disturbances in Cabul and Bokhara. Altogether, though calm and quiet at present, there were many heavy, gloomy, electric-laden clouds, looming and louring in the distance. Many things foreshadowed the coming storm. But few, if any, heeded them. There was the writing on the wall, plainly enough to be seen, the " MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN," but none saw it, or seeing, disbelieved or mis-interpreted. 'Tis certain that we were all so proud of our sense of superiority, so secure in our strength, so utterly regardless of, and had so much contempt for, the " Niggers," that we laughed to scorn all doubt, all warning. What ! take precautions against the obsequious, *Salaam*—bowing Soubador Ram Govind, the Hindoo Sub-Lieutenant; or Havildar Shaik Mahomed, the Mussulman Sergeant, who meeting the " Colonel Sahib," or even the Major, Captain, or Subaltern Officers, would address them as

“Khodàvn!” (*great Lord!*) “Gureeb Purvoo!” (*protector of the poor!*) and whose invariable reply to their Officers remarks was “Aup ko koosee,” (*Just as my Lord pleases*). Who then would dream of danger when all appeared so calm? Who could fear mischief from such good, excellent, faithful friends? So, though hints, advice and warning continually arrived, with expressions of dissatisfaction from Barrackpore, from Allahabad, from Meerut, Cawnpore, Allyghur, Lucknow, Delhi, and numerous other military cantonements; though we were daily hearing of Court-martials, imprisonments and other punishments for neglect of duty or general insubordination; we still heeded not. We thought it merely some passing excitement, perhaps irritation, that would blow over, be forgotten, and leave us all as quiet and serenely calm as before. 'Tis indeed almost certain that the Government, as well as the people all through India, were equally taken by surprise. It can hardly be denied that no one expected the awful storm of murder and rapine that was so soon to spread over the land. It seems, indeed, that the majority of Natives, as well as Europeans, were almost equally astonished to find themselves in the midst of a most dire and bloody rebellion.

And so came the eventful month of May, 1857. We were all wrapped in fancied security,

—all seemed quiet,—no fear, no doubt ;—when like the sudden dread clattering clash of a thunder-bolt ; came the horrid intelligence of the murderous outbreak at Meerut. Most of the European Officers and residents, with their families, had been killed. The Native Regiments quartered there had risen *en masse*, and joined by the "Budmash," the Indian "rough," the lowest and most mischievous of the *Bàzâr* population, had committed almost every possible excess and outrage. It should be observed that though the Mutiny commenced—believed prematurely,—at Meerut, Delhi was the real headquarters of the disaffected Sepoys.

SOON, ah ! how soon, the whole of the Upper Provinces were enwrapped in a devouring gulf of murder and rebellion. Delhi, Lucknow, Cawnpore, and Allyghur, with most of the military stations in Bengal, were all, more or less, in the hands of real fiends in human shape, who knew and showed no mercy to man, woman or child.—It was truly one large hideous seething Pandemonium. Our dark Helots had risen on their lords and masters ; and though, God knows, we had never treated them as slaves ; they believed or affected to believe we had been their tyrants. The more they had been humble, cringing and servile ; so much more were they now eager to revenge themselves and humble us. The worst

and most baneful passions of poor human nature were, at this unhappy juncture, excited against us. 'Tis now many years since those dark deeds were acted. 'Tis nearly all forgotten,—if it were possible for *Cawnpore*, that spot of dark horror and foulest treachery, which stands unique in the world's history of miserable, helpless oppression and suffering; and indeed exceeds, if possible, even the cruelties of that mad drunken wretch, Suràja al Dowlà, in the "*Black Hole of Calcutta*,"—can ever be forgotten! At all events, the onward march of Time, with his merciful draughts of oblivion, has brought us the power of calmly, and let us hope, dispassionately thinking of acts, that then nearly maddened us. We must not therefore neglect to record that, while amongst the Soubadars,* the Jemadars, the Havildars, Ressildars, Duffadars, Naicks and Sepoys of the Native Army, there was little but the blackest treachery, mutiny and murder; there were many blessed instances of devotion, kindness and generosity of the best and highest kind, among the domestic servants and many of the lower ranks of the native population. Many an old grey-headed Bairà, Chupprasee, Khànsàmà, or Kidmitigar;—many a faithful Ayah, and still more frequently

* *Soutadar*, *Jemadar* (Native Officers of the Indian Infantry) *Havildar* (Sergeant); *Naick* (Corporal); *Ressildar* and *Duffadar* (Native Cavalry Officers).

a *Dhye* (wet-nurse), risked their lives and the lives of their own children, to warn, hide, protect and assist their masters and mistresses with their *bàbàs* (children), to escape. Like the green oasis to the parched and sinking pilgrim in the desert; these human acts of faithfulness and love, stand out happily from the dark and murky gloom of the perspective. How well indeed it proves "that one touch of nature makes the whole world a kin." Even amongst the Sepoys of the revolted Regiments, mixed up and identified as they nearly all were with their brethren's hellish misdeeds; there were some who proved exceptions, and were good, true and faithful. Curiously enough,—among the most bigoted, the most intolerant of all our swarthy enemies, the *Brahmins*, the highest of the priestly and warrior caste, and whom all Hindoos respect and venerate; were found some men, whose exemplary loyalty was then surprising. Among those may be mentioned Soubadar Sewak Tewarree, Havildar Heralall Doobey and Sepoy Ramon Doobey, all of the 48th Regiment of Native Infantry, who arrested the bearer of a seditious letter and brought him to the Colonel. Then the 1st N. I., stationed at Cawnpore, revolted on the 5th of June, some time after the outbreak, and marched out of their lines about 3 o'clock in the morning. Previously however to their

doing so, the Sepoys nearly all being high-caste *Brahmins*, evinced a wonderful feeling of regard for the English Officers. These gentlemen, for some time, to show their confidence with men whom they would not suspect, had been accustomed to sleep in the Quarter Guard of the Regiment. The Native Officers and men now begged, entreated, nay, actually forced them to go into the entrenchments as a means of safety. Again, when the disarmed 26th Regiment of Light Infantry mutinied at Mean-Meer, the Havildar Major (corresponding to our regimental Sergeant-Major), "Pay" Havildar, and some other Brahmin soldiers, actually lost their lives in the vain attempt to maintain order. Indeed, quoting from a report of the time:—"It is but too true that several faithful Sepoys were bayoneted at their guns, in the Bailey-Guard Battery, in Havelock's first relief of Lucknow, by the infuriated soldiers of the 78th Highlanders, who unhappily confounded them with the rebels. None of them offered any resistance, while one poor fellow, waving his hand, and with the words 'It's all for the good cause—welcome friend,' expired."

In Calcutta we were all excited nearly beyond endurance at the news continually heard of the sufferings of our poor friends "up country." The feeling with everyone was "let us help—let us do something to assist

and strengthen the Government." We had public meetings at the Town Hall and Freemason's Hall in Cossitollah. We offered ourselves as Volunteers, either to go against the rebels and mutineers, or to strengthen the guards and posts in Calcutta. After some time our offers were accepted. Not at once though. We were all too impetuous—too excited—too impatient of control. We would have done more mischief, far more, than good. Fortunately for us and all India ; a wise, strong-minded, brave though cool, calm and collected man, was at the helm. That great and brave man was our Governor-General, Lord Viscount Canning. He it was who, in the midst of such a storm and hurricane of bitter revengeful feeling, as, if it had been permitted, would have deluged the whole country and continent of India with blood ; preserved a calmness, a wise and far-seeing policy, with a care for the best interests of all, European and Native ; as have now gained for him everlasting gratitude. And this was the man, who, nick-named "*Clemency Canning*," was sneered at by some, and faintly praised by others. There were indeed some who even said he was nervous—nay afraid ! No one who knew this eminent man, —none whose privilege it was to meet him, to see his good works, his political acts, his prompt and firm orders for the public weal ;

could dare to utter, far less to believe, so cruel, false and dastardly an accusation !

No! Canning knew not the meaning of fear. Nor did he ever doubt the result of our arms, or our—rather *his*—firm and just policy. He may, he *must*, have felt the great and awful responsibilities of his position. But he never *feared*, he never hesitated or wavered. There were indeed times and occasions when the bravest, the most bold and lion-hearted quaked and throbbed ; thrilling with high excitement and anxious, feverish expectation.

Such was the juncture when the brave and devoted Neil marched up through the stormy waves of rebellion with the small and weak detachment of troops that could be then spared. *He* was the first from Calcutta ; and with his puny force, in the blazing heat of the hottest season in Bengal, he performed such acts of daring valour as would have earned for him the highest reward of rank and honour ;—when unhappily he was stricken down and died of that terrible Indian disease, cholera. Then marched up Havelock and Sir Hugh Rose (now Lord Strathnairn). And then went the brave tried old soldier, Colin Campbell (afterwards Lord Clyde). Foremost of all, however, went that bravest of the brave, generous, self-forgetting, self-denying James Outram. These heroic chiefs were well supported by

such men as Wilson, Greathead and Norman,—Hodgson, Lumsden and Chamberlayne,—Tombs, Probyn and Huyshe,—Olpherts, Daly, Little and Horsford ;—with many, very many others, whose lives, courage, energy, endurance and strength, were at this supreme time all freely and cheerfully given to their country. What dramas! What tragedies, were then performed. Think of that murderous serpent-like fiend, *Nana Sahib*. Think of his foul treachery. Then think of that grand old brave soldier, General Sir Hugh Wheeler, with his too trusting, too honourable, open and confiding disposition, when treating with this cruel Nana at Cawnpore. See that good philanthropist, the clever politician, able administrator and brave Officer, Sir Henry Lawrence, lying patient and resigned, though desperately wounded, and dying from the effects of a shell bursting in the Residency, during his grand defence of Lucknow. Then, see and think of the despair and misery of those old and young, weak and helpless, men, women and children,—even innocent darling infants,—who, huddled and penned in that small horrid stone dungeon, were so brutally done to death,—fired on and bayoneted in cold blood by the slavish murderers ; until the spot became a very human shambles.—Pah !—it makes one almost dazed to merely think of it. Then again, after Have-

lock's first abortive attempt to relieve Lucknow—think of the poor, starving half-dead, helpless women and children, despairingly crouching there.—Truly, few sensational romances and novels,—few realistic plays of the present day,—can match in interest the many eventful occurrences of that dread Indian Mutiny.

To return to Calcutta. Our Volunteers had been drilled and exercised, and were now being speedily formed into Regiments of efficient Cavalry and Infantry. We all took our turn of duty. Some forming pickets at the Government Survey Office in Park Street, some at La Martinière, others at the Military Asylum at Kidderpore. I fear, though, that at first our Sentries were rather more energetic, if not officious, than actually judicious or, perhaps, altogether necessary. But the temptation and excuse were certainly very great. So, if some late native wayfarer, Nubboo Buxsh the *Dhobee* (laundress),—Ramdeen, *Durzee* (tailor),—Sheik Hârim Khan, *Ghostwâllâ* (butcher), or even Mudhoo the *Maiter* (sweeper), one of the lowest caste of natives, did come in for a little fright and rough handling from our amateur military police, there was surely, under the circumstances, some excuse for them. This however soon sobered down and found its proper level.

All excesses of any kind were rigidly put down.

We were now in the middle of June, the hottest time; and this eventful year was, even for Bengal, an exceptionally *hot* season. So we were grilling. "Prickly heat" and other piquant amusements were in the ascendant. Altogether, we, the loyal residents of the *City of Palaces*, were having, as our American cousins say, "a good time." We were daily, nay hourly, excited with news, sometimes good, sometimes bad. Now it would be that Delhi had surrendered. Then that Nana Sahib had been taken. All sorts of *Gup*, every kind of *gobe-mouche* was in turn heard and believed. At last—it was Sunday morning, 15th June—dark rumours were heard of the Native troops at Barrackpore, who since the commencement of the Mutiny had been closely guarded by the English regiments, having broken away, and that they were now actually *marching on Calcutta*! Some had heard during the night the tramping of the horses of the Governor-General's body-guard, a fine and splendid looking corps of Native Cavalry, all being picked men of proved courage, and who then and always have, shown themselves in the highest degree, loyal, trustworthy and brave. Then others had seen or heard of the marching of Infantry from Fort William. Of course the

uncertainty and mystery of these reports caused much excitement and some terror. Particularly was this so among those residing on the line of road. Many indeed were excusably nervous, while others were calm, though prepared for the worst. It turned out though that there had been more than ordinary foundation for the fears of the morning. The Government had received authentic and trustworthy intelligence of a *plot* for a simultaneous military rising at Barrackpore and Calcutta! Vigorous and effectual steps had been immediately taken to nip this project in the bud. We now learned to our infinite satisfaction that our real *bête noir*—the black troops of Natives, who had been for so many weeks a seething hot-bed of discontent, and on the very verge of mutiny; had been at last disarmed! We were therefore free of any fears of them,

In the afternoon of this said "*Panic-Sunday*," towards sundown, all the Sepoys in Calcutta and suburbs were deprived of their arms. 'Twas about 6 o'clock p.m., when the Native Regiments in the Fort were paraded. In position, and opposite to them, were arranged our English troops. Infantry and Artillery, with loaded Rifles and Guns, stood ready and willing—ah! how too willing—to shoot them down at the slightest provocation. All *they* wanted—panted for—was the order to "pre-

sent ! " " Fire ! " Fortunately however for the black fellows, certainly *black-guards* all (arcades-ambo), there was not an instant's hesitation when the stentorian order of " Sepoys, pile arms ! " was thundered out by the burly, determined, stern-looking Fort Commandant. The Sepoys couldn't turn pale if they would ; but they certainly did look a sickly, yellowish, leaden blue, at being so purely caught in a trap. Anyhow, down at the word of " command " they laid their rifles on the ground ; quickly returning to the " attention," standing stiffly upright until " dismissed." Quick now came up " fatigue parties " of our men, bringing with them cars, carts and waggons, in which they speedily placed all the arms of the would-be mutineers. At the same time, while this necessary *coup-d'état* was doing in the Fort, all the outlying Guards and Sentries were visited, disarmed and replaced by English soldiers. Before nightfall the whole of the Sepoys had been deprived of their arms and all power of doing harm. For some time after, it was rather curious, if not comical, to see " Johnny Sepoy," as our jolly fellows chaffingly called them, doing " orderly " or even sentinel duty with only a *ramrod*, in place of Carbine or Rifle.

Thus finished our " *Panic Sunday* ! " Even

here, the good lieges of Calcutta were bespattered with reproaches and sneers at their being "frightened." 'Twas however far from the truth. Indeed, as a general accusation, it was false, and a wicked libel. Of course there were some few, as there always must be, in such cases, who "lost their heads," and in sheer fright for the safety of their wives and children—and small blame to them for that—abandoned their homes, and went on board some of the Ships lying in the Hoogly. These were, however, a very small insignificant minority. Nothing, as a rule, could be better, calmer, braver, and more steady, than the excellent behaviour shown truly under the greatest possible trials—of nearly all the residents of Calcutta. They indeed well proved themselves, from our good, great and noble Governor-General, down to the lowest in rank and station, as well able to defend themselves, if necessary, as they were really free from any undue fears or thoughtless panic.

CHAPTER IV.

"CHOTA HAZREE."

"DEKHO PEEROG!"—"Mind Pæroo!" call me early, about half-past four, to-morrow morning; I'm going for a ride."*

Such is the frequent and ordinary *hookum* (order) given to one's *Bairà*, by those who like exercise, wish to keep in health, and are not too lazily fond of bed. In Bengal, and indeed all parts of India, for full nine months in the year, the heat is so great from a little after sunrise to sunset—say from 6.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.—that few go out for mere pleasure or recreation, between these hours. Indeed, generally from February to October, exposure to the sun's fierce rays is a matter of some risk, if not danger. However, with all these drawbacks and difficulties, let it not be thought that we hide ourselves, and do not go out in the day. Far from it. In all the principal cities and stations of India, especially in the Presidency Towns of Calcutta, the *soi-disant* "City of Palaces," Bombay and Madras,

* The Native vernacular of this is:—"Kul fujjur amko khoob sufférie jugado-quei sàrà char bujjur: Kiewastee am bar-jàgà, Ghorà ke howà Kànnà-Ko."

there's all sorts of regular routine business, official, professional, and mercantile, requiring daily attention, and making it absolutely necessary to subject oneself to the really glowing heat raging outside. Of course, all "old stagers" take due precautions, wearing thickly padded "*Topees*," caps, or helmet-shaped hats, made of the light pith, with many folds of white *Puggarees* wound round them, and hanging rather gracefully behind the neck. Then their little "office" carriages have generally, if not always, double-roofs; while in the real "*Hot-Season*," from about 15th February to end of August, one's *Office-Jaun*, or *Palkee Gharee*, has an extra screen of tent-like cloth passing over the roof and projecting on each door at the side. Some luxurious Sybarites go further still, and have *Kus-kus tatties* (rush country mats) wetted by the *Bheesties* (water-carriers), hung in front of the *Gharee* doors.

Anyhow, the men-folk all over India, must and *do* go out at all times and seasons. "Men must work," *gela va sans dire*. As for the dear English ladies in India: "Qui-Hye" says it with pride and pleasure, that the present race of the fair, dear and charming companions of our life in Hindoostan; are happily far from having anything in common with the lolling, vapid, half washed-out, poor useless creatures,

most of their predecessors in old Anglo-Indian times certainly were. Thank heaven! those dear ones are now too much imbued with the Home-English feeling of independence, are much too spirited and fond of healthful excitement to permit them ever to subside into the luxurious, inane, and slothful habits of the poor "*Purdah Ka Beebee*" (native harem ladies), or of even those other dames of mixed blood, breed, and general anomalous position, who are vaguely and indifferently called "half-caste," "country-born," "Eurasian," or in the vernacular uncomplimentary slang, "*Chee-chee!*" Still, spite of the energy of our wives, daughters, and sisters, spite of the necessity for the Sahibs to "*Bar-jou*" (go out) in such heat as would astonish the weak nerves of many a fashionable *flaneur* in London or Paris, one really does not care to go out at all—except obliged to do so—when the sun ranges from 110° Farenheit to any *possible*, or to "home" ideas almost *impossible*, theometrical height. There are, however, many ladies who will *always* go gadding; while there are others who, half-fainting with the heavy heat, are only anxious to escape the wearisome and oppressive *ennui*, induced by closed *jilmihs* and windows, darkened rooms, and the slow, almost maddening monotony of the sleepy waving *Punkah*.

These, *faute demieux*, call for their Gharries and off they go. But in Calcutta even these fair ones who are so bold as to leave their homes and encounter the blazing heat outside, soon return from their visiting, or shopping for gloves, millinery, or jewellery at the "Exchange," Bodelios, Baker and Catliffe's Emporium, or Hamilton's, the fashionable jewellers. Then comes "Tiffin" (luncheon). After this refectation there's little or nothing but to wait patiently till about sun-down, when the Sahibs, having returned from their "*kom*" (work), dress and mount the horses ready waiting under the portico in care of the *Syces* (native grooms), who, with turbaned heads, white clothing, and naked legs and feet, are sedulously employed in flapping off the flies from the horses with a *chowrie*, a sort of flowing horse-hair fan.

Off they go, in a walk or gentle canter, followed by the *Syces* walking or running behind, towards the Mall or Strand, as the road by the river side, is called. Those too tired and enervated for riding, content themselves with a drive in the Gharree. The conveyances seen on the Mall, are of all kinds, sort, and fashion. It must be remembered that everyone has some kind of carriage. That is simply a necessity in the East. So there is the luxuriously grand "turn-out," the Lan-

dau, Barouche, or Phæton of the great Member of Council, Secretary of Government, Judge, or other official magnates, whose beautiful horses—generally thorough-bred Arabs—and perfect appointments, might well vie with any in St. James's or Rotten Row. Here rolls the neat *Palkee Garree*, with the pale, sallow wife and daughters of the Office Clerk, or merchant's assistant. Here comes the Bill or Ship-broker, in his light office *Jaun*, driven by one of those fast-going sturdy Burmah Ponies. And here swiftly drives the hard-worked Doctor in his roomy yellow chariot.

Occasionally also may be seen slowly plodding along, the native "*Ekha*," with its primitive-looking yoke of milk-white Buffaloes; its rough, unpainted wooden springless and heavy jolting car, covered with thick folds of crimson *Saloo* cloth *Purdahs* (curtains), most carefully and zealously closed, on the native females riding, huddled, inside. Between six and seven o'clock every evening the "Strand" is crowded, and presents a gay and animated scene. Everyone eagerly comes to revive themselves after the fainting, stifling heat of the day. The route is from "Chandpol-Ghât" to "Prinsep's-Ghât" (a *ghat* is a water-side landing place). So, on one side, flows the noble, broad, and cool-looking River Hoogly. On the other we have Fort William,

with its grass-covered terraces, mounds, parapets, and embrasures, giving glimpses of the leaf-hidden peeping guns, and the steady-pacing native Sepoy sentry, with his swart characteristic marked features, scarlet English uniform, and Shako covered with snow-white Puggaree. Oppose the line of fine buildings forming Government House and Town Hall—an imposing looking place with a noble portico and flight of steps—and the High Court of Judicature, are some pleasure-grounds, originally laid out in Lord Auckland's time, and called after his family name, Eden's Garden. Here is a soft tan-covered ride; while, separated from it by an iron rail, are pleasant, well-watered and cool-looking grass plots and walks, with charming plants and flowers. Here also is the Band-stand, where two or three evenings in the week the band of the Regiment in Garrison discourses sweet music.

There are seats and a *Kiosque*, where *burruf* (ices) and other cooling refreshments are supplied and eagerly consumed by the warm and thirsty *Sahib and Mém logue*. 'Tis pretty and pleasant to see the dear children—charming, though mostly pale, wan, and delicate—toddling and playing about, with their attendant black Ayahs, Dyhes and Bairás. Altogether, the Band-stand in Eden's Gardens is one of the best “institutions” and amuse-

ments in Calcutta. But time marches on—'tis dark!—and we must return for our "*Khànnà*" (dinner).

This important affair is quickly followed by a cup of Coffee or Tea; and then—should there be no amateur concert, reception, or Ball—for we *do* dance in Calcutta, though, truth to say, hardly in the "Hot-season"—off we retire! "early to *bed* and early to *rise*," &c., being the Anglo-Indian general motto. And now this early, preternaturally early rising necessitates some little slight refreshment. "Hazree" (breakfast) is out of the question. Equally impossible is it to go out riding or driving without some little creature comforts. "Hazree" itself is an affair of importance only second to the *Khànnà*. It is indeed more like the *Dejeûner à la fourchette* of the European Continent, than the ordinary spare and meagre English breakfasts; being substantially inclusive of meats, *patés*, fish, ragouts, soufflets, cottolettes, and curries; saying nothing of such sweet adjuncts as jams, preserves, chutnee, chow-chow, confitures, and other condiments, Indian and European, with Tea or Coffee, Hockheimer, or Veuve Cliquot, according to taste and habit. This grand restauration is taken ordinarily about nine o'clock, but varies according to the business and engagements

of the Sahibs. From that time, or even earlier, if living at Garden-Reach, Howrah, or Kidderpore; and up to, perhaps, eleven o'clock for the more indolent. Thus, an early Breakfast—"Chotà-Hazree," literally "*small* or little breakfast," is therefore a real necessity. With some 'tis a very simple affair, and rarely is more elaborate than a plain cup of coffee, chocolate, or tea, with a biscuit, crust, or dry toast. Gentlemen—the younger Sahibs especially—go in for iced "Beer-srob" (Bass or Alsopp's "Pale" or "Bitter"). Others even shout for "pegs" of "B. and S.!" Chacun à son goût. But every one, and everywhere in India, early or late risers, going out or stopping home, all "go in" for some kind of the truly universally partaken Chotà Hazree. It is, in fact, an "Institution." So those who don't care so much for riding or walking, adjourn for greater chance of cool air to the large and roomy verandah, such as are on one or more sides of every house, or Bungalow; and sitting back, with legs elevated on the broad and flat arms of the convenient American rocking-chair, sipping coffee, or *something* else, smoking a "No. 1" Manilla Cheroot, and reading the last overland importation of Magazines and papers; they manage to enjoy their Chotà Hazree. Remember! the only time in the hot

season when it is even comparatively cool is in the early morning. For though, after sunset, the temperature is somewhat relieved from the blazing furnace-like heat of the day, while at times a fitful but welcome refreshing breeze is felt through the Southern Verandah, often—nearly always, and especially during the "rains"—there's really no breeze at all. No, nothing but a dead, heavy, and oppressive damp steam-vapour heat, which indeed is quite the worst possible to bear.

The dry fervid heat of mid-day June and July is really more easily endured than the languor-giving vapoury steaming of many evenings in August or September. 'Tis at this time, that Mr. or Miss "Newcome" commence their acquaintance with "Prickly heat!" *That* charming and pleasant companion is, what Americans expressively denominate, "a caution." Oh! the misery of feeling this maddening irritation, and hopelessly wishing to relieve oneself, at most inconvenient and perhaps socially impossible times. Or to be morbidly anxious for any good Samaritan in one's family, to act for us the part of the "Great Duke of Argyle's" posts. Now, Moschetoës, to novices, not yet rid of the rich English blood, are perhaps slightly troublesome. But sooner or later one gets acclimatized, and then Monsieur

Moscheto, acquiring discrimination, scorns and slights us by his indifference. He passes us by for fresher and newer pastures. Of course, now and then a stray rover will manage to elude the Bairá's hand-punkah or towel, and our wary politics, in gliding and sliding quick as possible under the net Moscheto curtains of our Bed, when the loud trumpeting "ping" of his musical proboscis is found anything but conducive to tranquil repose. This is bad. But "Prickly-heat!" that, with its oft attendants, miserable painful boils, nearly always come again and again with each returning hot season; is truly the greatest torment and plague possible. But we hear it whispered: "What has 'Prickly-heat' to do with *Chotà Hazree*?" And, really, echo merely responds, "What?"

So—*revenons à nos*—"Buckree" (Goat), the ordinary substitute for *mouton* in Bengal. Chotà Hazree is taken by the Officer marching with his native Sepoys or European Soldiers, turning out at the "rouse-bugle" or "beat of Drum," at two or three, or even as early as one o'clock a.m., so as to get as much as possible of the "cool" time for the March. He sips his coffee and biscuit, brought to him by his *factotum* bairá or kitmidgar, and takes it while the Lascars are loosening the Tent-pegs and ropes, previous to bringing the Tent—as

they speedily do—down with a run. The Passengers "out," or going home, on board the P. and O. Steamer; or the poor feverish ague-stricken invalid, on one of the Pilot Tug Steamers from Calcutta to the Soonderbunds, on the chance of being patched up by the salt sea-breeze, for further grilling and steaming; all and each have their *chotà hazree* brought to them soon after sun-rise on Deck, where sitting on the bulwarks, hencoops, or hatchway, with their legs tucked up to avoid the sluicing pails of water chucked on the deck by the Sailors or Lascars, they enjoy the welcome refreshment. Or the brave and daringly enthusiastic tiger-hunter, "Indian Nimrod," or "Old Shikaree," who for a chance of "potting" some horrid "man-eater," has besides his ordinary "No-kurs" (servants), a numerous, and *not* select, "tag rag and bobtail" of the dingy half-frightened villagers acting as beaters, and all as noisy and fussy, as they will surely be sneaking and cowardly, in actual presence of the "Bagh" (Tiger), from whom they'll quickly turn tail and fly at the first sound of his angry growl or roar. Our Sportsman—generally a fine spirited young English Civilian—is perhaps Assistant Magistrate or Collector, or even the "Burrah Judge Sahib" himself; for nearly all ranks of Englishmen are passionately devoted to sports in India.

Or it may be a young Officer, in a dull "up-country" station, who, weary of his monotonous Regimental or Detachment duties, is only too anxious to meet the growling, prowling, though powerful savage brute, of whom he generally contrives to render a good account. Terrible and fatal accidents sometimes occur. But our fine vigorous young Lieutenant, or Magistrate, cares not. They little, if ever, "count the cost," or think of anything but the fine sport, and their hope—nearly always fulfilled—of bringing the *bagh* down. These bold and eager Tiger-hunters are generally keen of appetite, and ordinarily contrive to have their *Chotà Hazree* of a substantial kind, more like the *Hazree* itself; as not knowing when they may be able to "go in" for the big affair, they prudently take "time by the forelock." And so on *ad infinitum*. So much indeed is the custom engrained in the habits and system of old "Indians," that few, even after many years return to Europe, ever give up their *Chotà Hazree*!

CHAPTER V.

A "COUNTRY CAPTAIN," AND INDIAN COOKERY.

OUR fair readers are sure to be curious as to who and what "Country Captains" are; while they will be, perhaps, still more anxious to know what possible connection there can be with Military or Naval Commanders and—cooking. Happily, though "Qui Hye" is not quite so young as he was, he is still too appreciative of the goodness and charms of his fair friends, to keep them long in suspense.

A "Country Captain,"—or as the Native table servants, our *Khánsamas* and *Kidmitgars* say, "Countreé Koptân,"—is the name of a most excellent, toothsome and savoury dish, much favoured as an appetizing part of the ordinary *Hazree* in Bengal. Some also call it "Hoosenai Kábob." "Qui Hye" has not that amount of practical knowledge of the mysteries of culinary art, to qualify him to hold cooking *séances* with Mr. Buckmaster, at South Kensington; nor could he write fascinating culinary romances *à la Soyer*, or serious cooking histories like Francatelli. Still less is he what ordinarily is understood by the term of a *Gourmand* or *Gourmet*. He must however

confess to a weakness for a *curry*, *mulligatawnie* and *Hoosenai Kubáb*, or “Countreé Koptân.” And though far from aspiring to the rank of Gourmet, or connoisseur of wines, he has many fond remembrances of the delights of imbibing, in the *Hot Season* of sunny India, and notably in Calcutta, a well iced bottle of *Veuve Cliquot* (sparkling champagne),—the Natives oddly call it “*Simkin*”—or *Rudesheimer*.

And first, as to our old friend the “Countreé Koptân.” This most inviting and not unsubstantial whet for the palled and *fade* appetite of old Bengalees, is made of a young fowl or chicken; the Kahnsámá calls it a *chotá moorghy*” (little fowl), but all *their* geese are swans; and all their diminutive, poor scraggy chickens are—if you believe them—fine plump pullets. However, this *moorghy* fried, partly curried, with a *soupçon* of “Imlee,” Tamarind acid, is truly a *plát* to be thankful for, when sitting down to your Calcutta breakfast, in the vapour-like steam heat of a morning in August. For, though you may not have the least inclination to eat, one taste of *Monsieur Le Vieux Capitaine* and *houp la!* you’re toned, braced up, and prepared to “go in” for even the serious and elaborate duties of an Indian *Házree*. There are doubtless many who only sneer at the possibility of East Indian dishes

being really good, or anything but mere bizarre—though, perhaps, excitingly piquant—curiosities of the table. But then (pray pardon our presumption) what do our friends in Europe know of real Eastern Cookery? As usual, *echo* answers "what?"—Here, now, is a case in point. The other day, while leisurely strolling down the gay and busy sunny side of Regent Street, taking advantage of the continuous alcove of awnings that give a somewhat Continental character to this fine London promenade, who should we meet but our old friend, Fred D'Arcy. Now, if Fred has a weakness for anything beyond his own dear self, and, perhaps, his pretty little wife; 'tis for a good dinner. He knows all the best Restaurants, from Blanchard's or Verey, in the West End, to Pimm's or Krehl in the City; while for a *recherché diner à la carte* he is one of the best pilots about town. The worst of Fred is, he will affect the connoisseur of Indian Cookery. He'll babble of curries, Kábobs and Pilaus, like any old yellow, liverless Nabob; while, as to Eastern *cuisine* in general, he pretends to know more than Halford, who certainly does understand a curry, or even better than "Qui Hye" himself. Well,—after the ordinary gossip of *flaneurs* in the height of the season, the hint at the last racy scandal of Lord Loughton and *La Ballerina*, the laugh at Bob Esmond's

escapade at the Richmond feed, or that shady case of "rooking" at the Junior Imperial:—he naturally enough subsides into, "But, I say, old fellow, you must come and dine with us. Come to morrow, quite *sans façon*, you know. And I say, Q—, we'll give you such a mulligatawny, such a curry: do come!"

Now, knowing Freddy's failing, we would rather be excused; but then, again, he's such a dear good fellow, Mrs. Fred is so nice, pretty and kind, that we had not courage to say "No," and so replied "Yes, all right." But what was the result?—The dinner, taken altogether, was good enough and well served, but the mulligatawny was an imposition and the "Curry" a *fiasco*! There was some really nice clear soup *à la Julienne*, but it was flanked with what Fred unctuously called "splendid mulligatawny, my boy!" This parody, or caricature, of what is a glorious dish in Calcutta,—though Madras is the real place to have it, or anywhere "up country" where a decent *ménage*, and a good *Boberchy* (cook) is maintained,—was here a mass of half-boiled, pappy, pulpy rice, with lumps of an old greasy fowl drowned in a quantity of yellowish brown watery liquid. "What do you think of that?" exclaims my friend, while even dear little charming Mrs. D'Arcy looks pleased at the success of her *menu*. What could a poor and

rather bashful old fellow say? Why,—“Oh, very nice indeed,” adding though as a conscience saving clause, “perhaps Ram Bustee, my old *Boberchy* at Simla, or my *Kahnsámá Házim Khan*, up at Sangapore, might have given a hint or two to your excellent cook:” but hypocrite like, smacking our lips, “it certainly is very good for London.” All bosh, you know! It was no such thing. To an old *sub Jántá wállá* (knowing one) like “Q” ’twas simply execrable. The same with the Curry. Why, ’twas no more like what we old Indians call and know as our “*Curreeá-bhât*” (Curry and Rice) than, to use a vulgar but forcible expression, “chalk’s like cheese.”

English people, who know no more about India than they learn by purchasing curry-powder or curry-paste—an abomination—or Chutnee and Guava preserve from Stemberidge, Crosse and Blackwell or Pythian; actually believe they *can* make a real Bengal Curry or Madras Mulligatawny by merely buying a bottle of the powder or jar of the paste from either of these excellent purveyors of Oriental comestibles. ’Tis rank nonsense. They can’t do any such thing. But if you happen to have a lady friend who, having been in India, knows what a curry should be; then perhaps, though not even then, unless she personally superintends and tests every stage of the cooking

operations ; we may have that rare and exceptional dish, a real good Curry ! There's not one Servant or Cook in a hundred that can be trusted with the many rather complicated manipulations necessary for a Curry. When well prepared, 'tis a feast for the Gods ! 'Tis not even tolerable otherwise. For, truly, there's no medium state. 'Tis either glorious or execrable ! Oh ! the horror of a " Curry " on board an ordinary Passenger Ship. That surely is the *ultima Thule* of all that is bad. Once we tasted a Curry on board one of the finest Ship's sailing between Calcutta and London. We always got good, nay capital dinners ; good tender meat, delicate poultry, and really nice desserts, with—on Sundays and Holidays—Olives and Champagne. Yet the Curries were simply abominable. And this was in a first-rate " A 1 " Passenger Ship, continually going and coming between England and India. 'Tis, or was, just the same on the noble " P. and O. " Steamers. It would seem indeed almost impossible to get any Curry fit to eat, anywhere afloat, except, perhaps, on one of the old crazy-looking Tug-Steamers, going with Pilots and occasional invalid " done up " passengers—to the breezy sea-blowing Soonderbunds. Here, somehow or another, one always is sure of a good, honest, toothsome Indian Curry.

Then, as to sorts and descriptions of Curries. Why their name is simply "*Legion!*" Now, enthusiastic admirers of French Cookery say, that a Cuisiniér Français could make a delicious *ragoût* out of a "pair of well-worn boots!" Well, we are certain, that any good Bengal *Boberchy* could make a fine magnificent Curry out of a simple shoe (*schou*). Of course, the pun is atrocious, though 'tis forcible and true. And now to a descriptive list of Curries:—Well, first and foremost, there's the Curry *par excellence*, made of Fowl; though that of the breast of Veal or Mutton are both extremely good. Then we've Egg Curry, Fish Curry, Vegetable Curry, including not only cauliflower, cabbage—the *schou* of my poor punning remark—potatoes, beans, and peas; but the Indian kinds: such as *Brinjall*, *Cuddoo*, and *Yam*, &c. Fruit Curries, including the sweet *Plantain* or *Kailá*, and luscious "*Jack*" or *Ketál*, and Cocoa-Nut or "*Narghyl*." The two best are the Fowl and Vegetable Curries. As for "*Mulligatawney*"—first of all, properly speaking, the name should be "*Mulgotawnee*," from "*Mulgo*" pepper, and "*Tawney*" or *Tánée* water. These are Madrassee or Malabar terms. In Bengal, water is "*Pawney*" or "*Pánee*." Then as to how a veritable "*Mulgotánée*" should be concocted?—The process is rather more simple

than for the generality of Indian dishes. Thus : a nice tender juicy Fowl should be cut up, then add plenty of good Patna or Burmah rice—that from Akyab, if you can get it, is the best—some fresh Curry ingredients, saffron, tumeric, ground chilies, well boil with mutton or fowl gravy. With judicious care in the cooking, the Mulgotanee should come to the table of a bright golden-yellow colour ; while the rice should be so exactly boiled as to become a fine, rich and thick—though not pasty—soup. A squeeze of lemon will make this a Mulgotanee to be remembered.

As to Native Cookery, pure and simple. First come the many different kinds of *Kabobs* or *Kubobs* (roasts). Then, there's the still more purely Indian—though it is common and general in all Oriental Countries—the *Pilau* or *Pulhau* : of which there are many sorts, more or less favoured by Mahomedans. The Hindoos, and particularly the high-caste or *jât*, seldom eat meat ; only fish or vegetable Curries. The Brahmins—the Priestly and highest caste—never eat meat, nor indeed even fish, or anything in which there has been life. The following is a receipt for two kinds of *Pilau*, as given to Qui-Hye by the well known Moulvie Jaffir Khán. The first has the Euphonious name of “Yakhai Pilau ;” the ingredients of which are : rice, meat-gravy, a

piece of *Bukree* (Kid) or Lamb, butter, milk, cream, coagulated boiled milk, almonds, cardamums, cloves, cinnamon, salt, lemon-juice, and—rose-water!—The other, called "Anánass (pine-apple) Pilau;" is made of rice, kid, onions, "*ghee*"—a native preparation of melted butter—sugar, salt, green-ginger, cinnamon, cloves, cardamums, coriander seeds, limes, and pine-apple!—These dishes are considered great luxuries by high-class *comme-il-faut* Mussulmen; while many of our Anglo-Indian—Eurasian—or *half-caste* friends, are equally partial to them. Qui-Hye must, however, confess to not having much experience in these Indian Native dishes. Nor can he say more, than that "*Kitchry*" or "*Kedgeree*," made of Dhall—an Indian grain all Natives are very fond of and constantly eating—rice, boiled with butter and milk; and flavoured with salt and cloves: is said to be very good. Then we have, "Moorghy Kábob Ke Muhammed Shah," which on a fashionable *menu* in Belgravia, Tyburnia or South Kensington, might read thus:—"poulet roti à la Mahomed Shah"—which *plât*, is something—only more elaborate—like our dear old friend, the "Countreé Koptân." As for "Kormah," "Dopiyázá," "Pursindi Siki," "Kábub - i - Khátee" — a Chinese or Tartar roast—"Khágina,"—an Indian sort of Omelette—"Kábob-Thalávee,"

“Khooftá Kábob Shánee,” “Puri;” with many other wonderful and eccentric culinary complications of meat and fish—sugar and salt—ginger, garlic, cayenne-pepper, and pineapple, the Bengalee or Madrassée Cook so delights to revel in, he knows little or nothing of. *Apropos*, of one of the above named Dishes, “Puri,” it is evidently a modern derivation from the French *purée*: or is the French *purée* taken from the Eastern *puri*? They certainly both apply to a matter of *cuisine* somewhat alike: the French *purée* being a thick vegetable soup, “aux petits pois,” being a notable instance;—while the Bengali “puri” is a combination of meat, cooked with flour, butter, milk, salt, cloves, onions, ginger and pepper.

Qui-Hye, however, takes his stand by the *mulgotánee* and the *Curry*! Especially the *Curry*. Like Jack Salt’s three wishes,—“All the grog in the World!”—“All the baccy in the World!”—and then rolling his quid and shaking his head, in doubt as to what he could have next, said in despair:—“Oh, give us a *leetle* more baccy!” So we say: “Curry, for ever”—with now and then a *mulgotánee* for a make-weight. You may get tired though of the best Madras *Pepper-water*: but never of a real, good, fine, rich and piquant *Curry*.

CHAPTER VI.

CALCUTTA SOCIETY.

CALCUTTA " SOCIETY " is exclusive.—Its exclusiveness is carried to a degree almost unknown to the most aristocratic circles at Home. It would indeed appear that the absence of any real aristocracy,—apart from the Viceroy and his family, a stray A.D.C., or a young Lordkin or two, with a slight sprinkling flavour or soupçon of Hon^s in the Civil Service—has served to create an aristocracy of officialism ; in fact, a Beaucrocity, which is the more haughty, imperious, and assumptive, from its being formed of the high and dominant power of the governing class. Another *raison d'être* for this peculiar assertive exclusiveness of Calcutta " Society," is the division and social—or rather *unsocial*—cliquism of the Civilian, Military, and Mercantile classes, who are nearly all as doubtful of their own exact position, as they are most jealous of the pretensions of each other.

First and foremost of all—is the high official class, which of course includes all members of the " B. C. S." (Bengal Civil Service). This is the Court circle, and may truly be termed

the *multum in parvo* of Calcutta Society. Then there's the Military Cliques,—there's no Navy to speak of in India. And then we've the rich and powerful representatives of the moneyocracy, the Mercantile circle.

The Military “Big-wigs,”—the Generals, Brigadier-Generals, Adjutant-Generals, Quartermaster-Generals, and other Officers of the Staff, with the Viceroy, and Commander-in-chief's A. D. C.'s, Military and Private Secretaries, &c., all of whom, 'tis needless to say, are of the Court courtly (*gela va sans dire*); and the families of the great “Merchant Princes;”—of course all meet and associate on pretty equal terms, with even the high and mighty Civilains. By-the-by, we have a young Eastern “Punch,” who rather irreverently styles these grand Civilians “Civil-Villains!”—’Tis, however, quite certain, that the “B. C. S.” is the acmé, the superlative, in fact the very essence of the *crème de la crème* of “*Society*,” in our Capital of India.

Thus:—Mrs. Charles Cullen, the Lady of the Under Secretary of State of—say the Rupee Department; though she may have been one of the many unimportant “nobodies” at home, and by-and-by will possibly be so again, when her husband, the “Hon.” Charles Cullen, retires on his pension and savings of two or three *lakhs*;—in fact, will be a mere atom in,

and of “Society” in London; is here, in Calcutta, a very great Lady indeed. She is a “boteburrah Mém!” Then,—Lady Semplar,—she is having a “reception,” with “a little music, you know,” this evening. We must look in if we would escape a wiggling next time we meet her pretty,—though rather proud and grandiloquent,—Ladyship. Lady Semplar is the wife of Sir Jabez Semplar, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., &c., &c., that long and plain, though very clever, shrewd Secretary of the Indian Foreign Office. Now, at Home in old England, in her good old Father’s farm—he was a Gentleman Farmer in Barfordshire—she would be romping in the garden, scrambling in the orchard, riding the roughest of bare-backed young Colts—and sometimes, even milking the Cows. Full of health,—brim-full of fun and high spirits;—she was truly, the best, kindest, and jolliest “little girl” in the County. And as for ceremony,—precedence,—or state; she knew no more than cherry-cheeked Nancy Dawlish, the Farm Dairy-Maid.

This—was, however, all soon to be changed. For now, comes home—“on leave”—Charley Trant, her elder Brother, who had gone out to India some years ago—when there was an East India Company,—a Gold-Mohur—or “Pagoda”—Tree, worth shaking, and some

plump and fat appointments, that in those dark and benighted days, did sometimes go,—like kissing,—by favour. Charles Trant has shook his tree:—has had the good fortune to get fine berths; particularly that splendid and rather easy place of Resident at Bagnipore: and is now Commissioner of Kellalabad, in the delightful Pooree territory. Being an oldish batchelor, he thought it would be a nice thir g to get his pretty young Sister to sit at the head of his table, and receive his guests at his Palace-like Residency at Kellalabad. He doesn't intend remaining much longer in India; in fact, expects in a year or two to get his seat in the Supreme-Council,—or Lieutenant-Governorship, previous to taking his congé and retiring on his pension. So—he persuaded his people to let pretty, fascinating Bessie Trant “go out” with him when he returned to Bengal at the end of his “leave.” I’ll get her a husband,” he said, “and make a *Burrah Laidee-Sahib* of her.” He means it, and does so.

Thus:—when a year later, Sir Jabez Semplar, who for his peculiar talent for “Financing” in particular, and aptitude for Indian Diplomacy in general; quickly mounting the rounds of the Official and Government ladder, has become from plain—certainly rather plain—Mr. Jabez Semplar, B.C.S., Assistant-Magistrate of the 24 Pergunnahs: The Hon.

Sir Jabez Semplar Lieutenant-Governor of Induspore; when Sir Jabez—in one of his grand King-like tours through the Province he rules over, with greater real power and authority, than even Mogul Emperor, Padishá, Rajá, or Máhárájá ever did before—comes round to Kellalabad; he of course stops with Charley Trant the "Commissioner-Sahib"! Here then, 'tis simple work enough. After a few days, continually seeing our really charming, fascinating little Bessie:—long and lanky Sir Jabez, with his stiff, rough moustache, but good expressive face; is thoroughly subjugated by her fresh and piquante charms. He pops the question—she, after a leetle coy maiden-like hesitation, says—"Yes"—and accepts the great *Báhádóor* who comes and goes with an Emperor-like retinue of Elephants, Camels, Horses, and gold-bedizened *Nokurs*; comprising a small army of Chobdars, Chuprassees, Chokedars, Bairás, Kahnsámás, Khitmidgars, and Lascars; with regular battalions of *Bázar* followers of all kinds and descriptions. Then, from Kellálábad to Induspore, goes our young bride, the *gi-devant* joyous and bright Bessie Trant; soon to be transformed into the stately and grand Lady of the powerful and popular Sir Jabez.—And now, she's in Calcutta, doing the honours of the Indian "F. O.," and holding "receptions" in her palatial Mansion

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in Chowringhee. It is one of those fine garden-houses on the upper part of the *Maidán*, and near the Cathedral, the St. Paul's of Calcutta. It faces the *Maidán* with its breezy open fields, across which the bright silver line of the "Holy" Hoogly may be seen glistening in the hot sunny haze. This evening,—the *Durwázá* gate is thrown wide open by the *Durwán* gatekeeper, who humbly makes his *salaams*, with open hands to his forehead, and bended head, as the swiftly passing carriages of the grand personages forming "Calcutta Society" are driven through the grounds, with the two *Syces* running in front shouting out loudly "*Vetch, Vetch!*" ("Get out of the way!") or "*Kobbedhar!*" ("Take care!") to the crowds of natives, who, attracted by the *Tomáshá*, at the "Burrah Lord Sahib's Ghur," are in some danger of being run over. The Calcutta Jehu, "*Kochewân*," as he's called—like most drivers, is anxious to show off; and so, drives up to the portico of the house with a dash, that brings his horses almost on their haunches. Here are seen large numbers of servants in whitest of flowing robes, turbans or *puggarees*, and *cummerbunds*—waist-belts—richly bound with gold lace in which are fixed golden-hilted daggers. These grand-looking *Nokurs*, line the spacious door-way, entrance-hall, and the wide, dark Teak-wood stair-case,

up to the doors of the reception rooms. These are long and lofty chambers, having on the South side numerous French Windows, or glass-doors, all opening on to the spacious cool verandah, which extends the whole length of this suite of apartments. To those lately arrived in India; the really fine Saloon, appears rather plain and bare. There are no Brussels, Axminster, or velvet-pile Carpets. Only where the Burrah Laidee Mém Sahib sits, with her most intimate friends—*nous-autres* of the "upper ten"—a square piece of carpet of the fine and rich Persian or Cashmere looms, is laid. The flooring, like the stair-case, is uncovered and of a dark—darker than rose-wood—teak-wood, which by constant rubbing and polishing, with the hard fibrous cocoa-nut bushes used so indefatigably by the *Meheters*—sweeper (lowest caste and class of servants)—has become that rich, black-brown colour so generally admired by strangers. The walls are not papered as in Europe; but the white *chunam* cement is bordered with pretty delicate tinted stencil tracery. Chairs, large and comfortable ottomans, lounges, *prie-dieux* and an Horizontal Grand Piano; is all there is of furniture. It is also well and brilliantly lit up with chandeliers and wall-brackets bearing numerous wax candles and small elegant oil-burners. Gas,—though used very

generally in the streets, entrances, and halls of houses,—is, in consequence of its greater heat, rather charily introduced in rooms.

And so,—see the “Lady Sahib,” as the handsome, old white-headed Bairá, Peer Mahomed, designated her Ladyship. Observe,—her quiet calm, nay, cool—if not cold—manner. See our Lady Semplar “recieve” that pretty, though rather fussy and prononcé Mrs. Burbage, the wife of the Colonel Commanding —th Regiment, and Commandant of Fort William, the Garrison of Calcutta. Notice, the high, though certainly graceful, condescension; the slight bend—the frosty smile. Now, look who comes?—Why, ’tis the Hon. Mrs. Montpelier, the Lady of Mr. Charles Montpelier, Member of Council, and the coming Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,—when Sir Stephen Fluke retires. Mrs. Montpelier is a daughter of Earl Clanrigger, who, poor as the proverbial “church mouse,” was only too glad to marry his rather passé Honourable Katherine to a “big-wig” of the great Indian Civil Service. Charming, perfectly charming, is the amiability of our proud Lady Semplar now. “So glad to see you, dear,” says her Ladyship, smiling sweetly, “’tis so good—so nice of you to come, you know.” The Hon. Mrs. Montpelier is a “great gun” in our Calcutta *haute société*, and is also

one of the principal singing members of the Amateur Choral Society. She is a large, fine, and grand-looking dame, with a rather small voice. 'Tis really good to see and hear her sing that Duet from "*Il Trovatore*"—*then* one of Verdi's most popular operas—with Dr. Herbert, the Presidency Surgeon and Deputy Mint Master. Herbert is a very polite, good-natured, indeed, kind-hearted fellow; but rather prim and starchy—particularly as to his small jet-black whiskers, which are always so trimly cut and curled to perfection.

In the old Punjuáb Campaign, he was Assistant-Surgeon of Blood's Battery of Bombay Horse Artillery; and being a fine, tall, handsome man, rather piqued himself on his appearance in the becoming uniform of that crack corps. His voice,—a baritone of not much power, but of good even quality and some expression—is a little too much for "Mrs. Monty," as she is rather familiarly called by some of the depreciatory set—the small fry, hanging on to "our" circle.

"Dear Mrs. Montpelier" has so formidable a train—has so much fan—such a quantity of drooping sleeves and handkerchief: that poor Ernstein, our professional conductor, has some difficulty in moving his hands to play the brilliant accompaniment to the grand *Trovatore* Duo, she's about singing with Dr. Herbert.

“ ’Tis so good of dear Mrs. Montpelier,” says Lady Semplar, smilingly, “so good of her to sing, you know.” Then, she’s so unused to sing before so large an audience. Poor timid creature! She’s embarrassed.—Whether she is or not, ’tis quite certain that Ernstein is. He, poor fellow, is playing under difficulties. He can’t get that handkerchief of hers away, or off his fingers. Now, he gently removes it—back it comes again: until rendered desperate and almost *hors-de-combat* as to playing; he whispers a word of remonstrance, which, by-the-by, don’t seem to be taken altogether in the most amiable manner. However, ’tis managed somehow, and the duo is finished with great spirit and *aplomb*. “So charmingly sung! so wonderfully good. Many thanks, dear; and to you also, Dr. Herbert.”

Now comes up to compliment “Mrs. Monty” and the Doctor, for their “really charming singing of that fine duet,” Sir George and Lady Deerhurst. He is tall, fine and burly; she, rather thin and quiet; but very kind, amiable, and a most admirable *mère de famille*. Sir George is nearly as great in music as he is in person and official position. In every way, he is a great man. For, besides his great reputation for governing and high office: he has really much talent as a musician, and well earns his

title of our "amateur Dragonetti," he being an admirable performer on that emperor of instruments—the Contra-Basso. Another tall, though quieter, graver, and not so grand looking member of our Amateur Choral Society, is the Hon. Cyril Burton—more lately "Sir Cyril," and Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. He is our "Primo Fagotto"—which to those unacquainted with the musical technicalities, means "1st Bassoon"—in our Philharmonic Orchestra. For we are musical to a high degree in Calcutta; and have an Amateur Philharmonic Society as well as the Amateur Choral we are now hearing. Our friend, Ernstein, is conductor of both societies. Sir Cyril also sings a little, and in those fine old English glees, "the winds whistle cold," and "Mynheer Van Dunk," with Darke, of the Financial Department, and that good fellow, Probert Tessington, our jolly Commissioner of Chokedars and Junior Police Magistrate; comes out rather well. By-the-by,—Darke, being, though Head Secretary of the Finance department, only one of the "uncovenanted" civil servants: he is, with our friend the generally popular Tessington, only on sufferance here at Lady Semplar's,—indeed, more for the sake of their musical talent, than their rather indefinite, if not equivocal social position. "*Nous autres*" are not very well

acquainted with members of the *un-covenanted* services.

To “Qui-Hye” though, it does seem a shame, that such excellent, clever, and good-looking gentlemanly fellows, as Darke and Tessington undoubtedly are, should be so ignored, shelved and snubbed. They seldom, if ever, move far from the piano, where sits their old friend the Conductor, Herr Ernstein. *Apropos*, of tall Indian celebrities;—Qui-Hye well remembers in *Auld Lang Syne*, a musical party given by his old friend and patron, the late F. F. C——y, Private Secretary of the Governor-general—not Viceroy then—(Earl Dalhousie) in his Bungalow, at Simla, the Hill Station in the Hymalayahs, that all the world—in Bengal at least—tries and manœuvres to get to: where some of the tallest men he ever saw were met together.

It was just after that much decried event, Lord Dalhousie’s annexation of the Punjab! There was H. B. R., the Postmaster General; the Hon. Major F., A.D.C. to the G.G.—he is now Earl of W——, having, though a younger brother at the time, shortly after succeeded to the title, through the accidental death of his brother, Lord B. Then there was Colonel A. M., Adjutant General; Mr., now Sir F. H.; and Mr., now Sir C. B. Qui-Hye can, even now—after so many long years—fancy he sees

that fine, noble officer, Colonel M., with his iron-grey grizzled head; getting up with R. and F.,—all fine, handsome men—to see who was the tallest. They were all over six feet high: but the palm of height was borne off by the Adjutant-General.—Ah! Simla was not at all a bad place for a youngster up from the broiling plains, in those old "Companee" days. But we must reserve our "gushings" anent dear, cool, flighty, flirty, Simla; for another of our old maundering "jottings."

To come back, not to our "Muttons"—but to our Calcutta Amateur Choral Society: As this is one of its special meetings; we are now to have a chorus. Looking over Ernstein's shoulder, we perceive it is the quaint old Madrigal "Down in a flow'ry vale." This, after some little exercise of the almost diplomatic tact he has acquired during his long experience in managing and conducting an amateur society, made up of so many—socially—incongruous parts, goes remarkably well. There is, however, nearly always some awkward *embarras*, caused by the hesitation of some of the fair—and grand—members, to sing with or next to each other. Miss de Parlent, the really beautiful and sparkling brunette, daughter of Sir Albert de Parlent; don't like singing off the same "part" or copy of the music—with Miss Galbraith, the rather

prim, but clever daughter of the uncovenanted Surgeon of the Police. Then, Mrs. Pritchard, the amiable wife of the Advocate-General, who, though possessing a good contralto voice, can't produce two notes in tune, will persist in singing on all occasions, to the great detriment and disturbance of Ernstein's ordinary calm equanimity.

And now, again,—see there,—there's Lady Stuart, the wife of Sir James Peter Stuart. Now Lady Stuart has a really charmingly-sweet, but flute-like voice: and, naturally, don't like to—and *won't*—sing next that very big and extensive Mrs. Colonel Baker, who sings somewhat in the style in which her warlike and worthy brave husband gives out the “Word of Command” on Parade. And, really now, Mrs. Colonel Baker *is* always *on parade*. On the contrary; Lady Stuart is quiet, amiable, and truly refined in her manner; and is altogether a charming fascinating creature. She has also a real, true fondness for, and appreciation of good music. She is therefore one of Ernstein's pet members. Now what's to be done?—Lady Stuart's beautiful voice and artistic singing are quite indispensable; while the military lady's performance might be spared. Ernstein cuts the gordian knot, and settles what threatens to be an awkward “difficulty,” by asking Lady

Stuart to favour him by singing from his "score," there being, as he conveniently said, "so few separate parts." So, with this oil thrown on the troubled waters, we are enabled to proceed. The fair Soprani and Contralti are got together and ready,—the Tenori and Primo Bassi, led respectively by Herr Olrecht, a young, fair, and sleek-looking German—a member of the great firm of Banff and Ganzinger,—and our old singing beau, Doctor Herbert. While the bluff and bold Bassi Profundi, our vocal *Double Basses*, are admirably assisted by the *élan* of Tessington, and the steadiness of Darke and Burton. And now we have "Va Pensiero," the fine declamatory Chorus from Nabuco, sung capitally. Then—Lady Semplar, tries her powers of inducement on our Primo-Tenore *par excellence*, F. F. C——. He certainly has a lovely voice, while his style and refinement of manner is everything one could wish. She succeeds at last, and he sings Boildieu's brilliant "Ah! quel plaisir d'être Soldat," with later on Schubert's lovely "Ave Maria." These grand songs, so different in their styles, but yet so characteristic of the fiery impulsive French, and the plaintive, poetic German: are sung to perfection by our wonderfully clever and really amiable Private Secretary of Lord Dalhousie. He and Ernstein are great

friends, and have been ever since they first met up at Simla, in the dear old times now long past and gone away. By-the-way, C——'s singing of that *chef d'œuvre* of Beethoven, "Ade-laide!" Donnizetti's "Or che in Cielo," the charming Barcarolle from "Marino Faliero," or the "Contract" Scena and Finale from "Lucia," was something extraordinary for an amateur; and indeed, there were few, very few Artistes in even the highest ranks, with whom he need fear to sing. He was indeed a true *fanatico per musica*. And now comes the time for our rather early "Calcutta Society" to disperse. So, we have as a Finale, Rossini's "La Carita" or Martini's "Va da sa via da qua"—can't remember which, 'tis so long ago—and then, after some slight refec-tion of Ices, "Burruf"—Claret Cup, "Loll-srob"—Champagne "Simkin"—or for the young-fry, *Ponche à la Romaine*, with some delicate cuts of "Moorghy" or "Peeroo"—Fowl or Turkey—for those liking the more substantial edibles; we descend with our *Mém* and *Missee Bábá logue*, and entering our *Gharrees*, off we go to Park Street, Elysium Row, *Páñch Kotee*, or Theatre Road: while some have a longer drive to Garden-Reach, Kidderpore, or Dumdum.

CHAPTER VII.

INDIAN SERVANTS.

INDIAN servants ! Truly their name is " Legion." At all events, in the large Presidency of Bengal it is so. Bombay and Madras establishments are not necessarily quite so extensive ; and, of course, are less costly than those in Bengal, where they are formidable indeed. Especially is this so in Calcutta. In that gay City of Palaces, persons of even moderate means and position, can hardly do with less than sixteen or seventeen servants ; while those of higher pretension, or greater income, have from twenty-five to thirty, up to any possible,—or to Europeans seeming almost impossible,—number, maintained by the great people, the *Big-Wigs*.

It should be remembered, however, that the habits of indolence induced by the langour and enervating influence of the great heat, with the almost universal custom of having everything done for you,—that at home you would do for yourself—even to the simplest matters, such, for instance, as stern, hard, and proud men having their socks put on for them, or sitting quietly to be rubbed down after the

morning "ghoosal" (bath)—necessitates the maintaining of a large number of servants. Then there are no such things, or persons, as "General Servants"—no "Maid-of-all-work," as at home. On the contrary; there must be a particular and separate domestic for each kind of work. No one of them can; or will, do the duty of another. And as to the "Maid-of-all-work," with the exception of the Ayah (a lady's and very young children's servant), and the Dhye (wet nurse), there are no female domestics in India. All and every sort of work, or service, with the above exceptions, is done solely by men.

As for needle-women—there are none. When you have seamstress's work to do; if you want shirts made for your husband, or chemisettes for your daughter; "pyjamas" (sleeping-drawers) for Tommy, or the Dacca muslin dress to be made up for Lizzie—you forthwith engage a man called a "Durgee" or "Dirzie," who sits in your veranah, flopping in the normal native position, on his heels—not cross-legged, as is the fashion of the knights of the sleeve board in all other parts of the world—and who will do you all the different sorts of work really as well, if not better, than any average French *coudreuse*, or English work-girl. Truly, 'tis a matter of special remark to all new-comers to see how well a *Durgee*,

who is in point of fact a native tailor, will hem, sew, stitch and "run," saying nothing of their great talent for embroidery and delicate fancy work. Then,—as before mentioned,—they can measure, cut, and make all kinds of under-clothing, and ordinary wearing apparel for ladies and children. In fact, your Durgee is one from whom more value is got than from most Indian servants. Many people,—bachelors even,—regularly maintain one, if not two or three Durgees. 'Tis really economical to do so. Another exception to the ordinary inertness, and, indeed laziness of the majority of *Nokurs*, is shown by the really hard-working *Bobertchy* (cook). He first has to cook the substantial *Hazree* (breakfast), which meal is served about nine or ten o'clock. Then comes *Tiffin* (luncheon)—which, in many establishments, often includes soup and roast, and—though ordinarily there is neither fish nor desert—is nearly as plentiful in its arrangements of varied *plâts* as the *Khánná* (dinner) itself. *Tiffin* is generally taken between two and three o'clock. Then we have the *pièce de résistance* of the day, the *Khánná*; which is served on the return from the *Howa-Khánná*, drive, about eight o'clock. None of the *Nokurs* live in the house. Most of them have wives and families living in the native quarters, which are generally plentifully spread

about in the neighbourhood of the "Sahib's ghur" (gentleman's house). The domestic offices of kitchen, pantry, and scullery, &c., are not in the dwelling-house at all. They are quite apart, in a sort of *Bungalow*, one-storied, thatch-roofed building, erected in the spacious grounds or "Kompound" generally attached to Indian residences. You are therefore spared the regale offered to the olfactory nerves of the diner-out in most houses in London. The cooking department in India is happily always some distance away from the house. The *Bobertchy* (cook)—in large families there are two or three—performs all the mysteries of soup-making, roasts, boils, makes his ragouts and fricassees, with curries, pilaus, "Countreé Koptan," &c., &c., in a not very inviting or savoury looking place, generally erected by the side of the stables, opposite the back or north-side of the *Ghur*. Here he comes, and remains "from early morn to dewy eve," cooking all day for his Sahib and family. Not until the *Khánná* is entirely served—at the earliest nine o'clock—can he leave. He then departs to his wife—or wives—and family. Some of these dark *Cuisiniers* have two or more wives. The *Bairá* is, however, in most houses, the principal, or head servant. He is the Sahib's valet, while, at the same time, he is a sort of house-steward in general. He also



GROUP OF SERVANTS.

ordinarily has the duty and privilege of engaging the inferior servants, such as the durgee, under-bairàs, maità and punkah-coolies; which of course gives him increased power, consideration, and chance of *Buckseesh*. The little actual work there is to be done in Indian houses, as sweeping the matting on the *Chunam* floor with a rush wisp or whisk, called a "*Jároo*;" or polishing the teak-wood stairs, is done by the Maitá, who, being of a low caste, or "*ját*," is the only servant who will do such work. The next to the Bairá in position,—though, indeed, the first in point of profit,—is the *Khansámá*. He is the head table-servant, and sees that the *Khidmitgars* properly prepares the table, and serves the viands. When all is ready; 'tis the Khansámá who says, "*Khánná, teeáry hye*," dinner is ready. He then gravely takes his place, standing with his arms crossed, behind the Burrah Sahib's chair, while the *Khidmitgars* take up similar positions behind other members of the family. Guests in India generally bring their own servants, either a *Khansámá* or *Kidmitgar*, who stands behind his master or mistress's chair, and attends specially on them. The Khansámá also takes the Mem Sahib's *hookum* (orders) for the different meals, and as he purchases and pays for all articles of food required by the family, he is altogether one

of the most important members of the domestic establishment. Khansámás have, indeed, so many opportunities for making profitable arrangements for their own advantage, that they often realise in a few years the foundation of a fortune. Most of them are fearful rogues, and will cheat most consumedly. With a few exceptions the Khansámá has literally no check on the extortional prices he puts on all articles he provides. 'Tis after the Khánná, that the Khansámá comes for "*Mem Sahib ke kookum*" (mistress's orders). Many of the young bachelors who are stationed in the "Mofussil" (up country), and have no "Mem" to assist them in the duties of the ménage, often endeavour to shirk the horrid monotonous bore of giving the daily order, by saying, "*Kooch purwáneh, hodj ke moffak lao.*" ("Never mind, bring the same as to day.") But in Calcutta, 'tis a daily or nightly infliction for the poor Mem Sahib to give the *Hookum* for next day. Emam Khán, the Khansámá, therefore regularly comes in with his deferential *Salaam*, bowing his head and lifting his hands to his forehead, saying, "Keeya hookum Mem Sahib hul ke wastee?" ("What orders does the Mem give for to morrow?" Now the poor lady has been probably put out with the Burrah Sahib's complaints as to the shortcomings

in the Khánná just over. She therefore testily replies:

"Oh, Emám Khán! what sort of a *Moorghy* was that we had for dinner to-day? It was dry and flavourless, besides being old and tough. *Dekho!* (look here!) the Sahib couldn't eat a bit, and declares he'll cut your *tullub* (wages) for daring to bring it."

"Nahi Mem Sahib!" humbly replies the Khansámá, "What can your poor *Gholám* (slave) do? *Moorghys* were very scarce in Bázár (market) to day, and the *Moorghy-wállá* (poulterer) said he gave a nice tender one."

"Kysa Jhoot bát toom bolingá!" ("What lies art thou telling!") returns the now angry lady,—“you know well enough a good from a bad fowl; it is only your cheating, charging me the full price of a fine fowl and bringing such a *Kráb kooch kom-ke naye* (bad, good-for-nothing one).”

Still more humbly and contritely Emám Khán now says in the true oriental style: "Gureeb Purvó! am kyá bolingá?" (Protector of the poor! what can I say?) and continues, "it's truth I'm speaking, *jhoot bát am kuddee naye kurringa*—(lies I'm never telling)." So, the old hypocritical rogue goes on with all sorts of seeming truthfulness, but really the most lying excuses. The fact is, natives have no care or regard for truth. They will say

anything the most convenient for themselves; and will lie to your face in the most cool, and—to strangers unacquainted with their ways—apparent frank manner. But now our Mem Sahib has another complaint:

“The curry to-day,” she says, “was also bad again, “*Kysá kráb ludget* (such a bad flavour).

Then Emám Khán is in his element; he can pass off the blame to another. “’Tis that *Soostee-wállá*, lazy Ram Deen, Bobertchy; I told him, Mem Sahib, that you had complained, and that you wanted to-day a real *pucká-curria*, with plenty nice *narghil* (cocoa-nut), and fresh *Imlee* (tamarind) *Ke-ludget* (flavour) in it.” And then he goes on with:—“But he’s a mut-wállá (drunkard), and what can you expect when he’s ‘*peengá, peengá*’ (drinking, drinking)—all day.” “Well,” says our poor, tired, and bothered lady: “You must tell *Ram Deen*, if he don’t give *us* better cooking, I shall certainly give *him* ‘*Juwáb*’ (dismissal).”

Now “*Juwáb*” means literally a reply or answer; but in the sense as used by our amiable, pretty, though now awfully bored lady friend—it is, by-the-by, Mrs. Tracey, the wife of Tracey, the magistrate of Bowkanipore; which being close to, if not quite a suburb of Calcutta, enables him to enjoy all the expensive luxuries of a house and establishment in

the palatial city, instead of the more economical, though, perhaps, dull and humdrum life of his official "station." Well, Ram Deen, the "srob" loving Bobertchy of Mrs. Tracey, is no favourite of Emám Khán, he not having been sufficiently subservient, and still worse, having complained of the inferior quality of Emám-Khán's provisions, making it, as he says, "difficult to cook well." So, now, our Kahnsámá thinks he has his enemy "on the hip;" and therefore gleefully, though gravely enough to outward seeming, says: "Am khoob bolingá ooská págee adémye." ("I'll right well tell that beast of a fellow.") Then our poor, tired lady, flushed and annoyed with the continual never-ending trouble of this daily plague of her life, at last pours out her wrath on the old, hoary, soft-speaking, cheating hypocrite, with, "Dekho, Emám Khán! mind now, I won't put up with Ram Deen, or you either, and unless you provide better, I'll get another Kuhnsámá, so Kobbedar (beware)!" This gives our grey-bearded, venerable-looking rogue a fright. His *purwástees* (privilege and profits) are too great to be thrown away. So, for some time, a week or two, perhaps, he'll bring really good *Moorghys*, Buddocks (Ducks), Peeroo (Turkey), with tender Beef and Mutton. As for the *hookum* for tomorrow; our Mem Sahib, Mrs. Tracey says:

“Now, Kahnsámá, for *Hazree*, we must have a nice *Hoosenai Kábob*, do you understand?”

“Ahn Mem Sahib! you mean *Countreé Koptan*.”

“Well, well, Country Captain or Hoosenai-Kábob, mind we have a good one, and bring some good *Mutchee* (fish), nice *Hilsa Mutchee*, you know, and tell Bobertchy to *Khoob bágee kero* (fry it well).”

“Oure Kootch”?—(“anything else?”) says Emám Khán.

“Yes, we must have a Chingree (prawn) curry;” and then continues: “for Tiffin let there be a *Mulgo-tánee*, some veal cotelettes with tomatoes; and, as ’tis now cool weather, we can have the *tundá Buddock* (cold duck) left from to-day’s *Khánná*.”

“But the *Khánná ke hookum*, Mem Sahib!”

“Oh! for dinner, we expect Captain Muspratt Sahib and his Mem, Judge Tessington Sahib, with Parke Sahib and his Missee Bába’s; so mind now,” says Mrs. Tracey, “mind Kahnsámá, it must be a *khoob atchá khánná* (real good dinner), and dekho! if the Burrah Sahib is pleased I’ll give you a *Burseesh*.”

“Bote atchá (very well) Mem Sahib,” cries Emám Khán, delighted at the double prospect of cheating beyond ordinary *dustoor* (custom), and getting a present besides.

"Shall I go and order from Spense's a 'Saklee' Mutton"—(his, and the ordinary native way of saying "Saddle of Mutton.")

"Yes, yes,"—says the Mem, "I leave it all to you; and by-the-by, send Buxhoo, the cooly, for plenty *Burruf* (ice), to cool the wine and beer-srob, and don't forget to order *meetá-burruf* (confectionary ices) from Wilson's."

Some establishments are fearfully overweighed with servants; and though few, if any, of them receive high wages, the total amount for so many is a considerable drain upon all moderate incomes. Where there are children, an extra number must be maintained for special attendance on them.

There must be an Ayah for "Burrah Missee Bá bá," (Miss Tracy); and another for "Missee Emlee Bá bá;" while the "Chotà Bá bá" (the baby), requires the services of a *Dhye* (wet nurse), an Ayah, and an extra *Bairá* all to itself. Apropos to *Bairás* and *Bábás*.—A *Bairá*, with a *Dhye* and *Ayah*, having charge of a very pretty baby—it excited great attention and admiration for its beauty. This was by the Band Stand in Eden's garden; and on someone asking the *Bairá*, "Kiská Sahib ke Bá bá?" ("Whose child it was"?) was cooly answered that it was "Scardine, Jinner & Co.'s ke Bá bá," the fact being, that the pretty

lace-bedizened and beflounced baby, belonged to a partner of that eminent mercantile firm.

But to return to our subject, of the necessity of maintaining large establishments. It must be remembered, that every one always rides or drives. No one will walk the slightest distance, excepting, perhaps, one or two eccentrics, who may be seen towards evening taking their praiseworthy, but certainly monotonous, if not melancholy, promenade on what is called the "Secretary's Walk," by the *Maidán*, and the red brick-like powdery road forming the "Ellenborough Course."

Many conveyances and horses must therefore be kept, more or less, by every family; of course entailing the engagement of a regular troop of *Coachwán*, Syces, and Gausieras, —Grasscutters. The *Málik* or *Burrah-Sahib* (Master of the house), must have his Office-Jaun and Burmah Pony, while he also requires one or two, if not more, riding horses. The *Mem Sahib* has her *Palkee-gharry*, and pair of horses, for her visits in the day, and party-going in the night; while for the "*Howá Khánná*" on the Strand or Mall; she must have her grand *Barouche*, or *Landau*, with a pair of fine high-stepping Bay or Chestnut Cape Horses; or perhaps a pair of those beautiful Grey Arabs so rarely seen except in Bombay and Calcutta. Sometimes our dainty

Mrs. Tracy ; proud and handsome Lady Semplar ; or grandiloquent Hon. Mrs. Montpelier ; prefer riding with the Sahib's. On such occasions, their specially well-trained riding horses are used, while later on the Palkee-gharry, Barouche, or Landau with the Coachman and Syces, is in waiting by the entrance to Eden's Garden to take the poor tired ladies home after the fatigue of their ride from Chowringee, and one or two gentle canters round the Band Stand. Then, each of the Bábás—the native servants call all young and unmarried people " Bábás "—must have his or her pony, or horse. This of itself will prove the necessity for keeping many *Nokurs*. Though some of these necessary evils are paid as low as four or five rupees (eight or ten shillings) a month ; or " per menssem," as is the rather pedantic and quaint custom to say in India—while they all provide themselves with board and lodging ; while even the highest rate of wages is comparatively small ; the great number of them make their *tullub* (wages), a considerable amount in the aggregate. A first rate Bobertchy (cook), seldom receives more than fourteen or sixteen rupees (twenty-eight or thirty-two shilling) a month. The head Kahnsámá, may get ten or twelve rupees ; and the head Bairá eight or ten rupees a month. Thus,—though few, if

any, get really high wages; their number makes the total a formidable amount; while the universal innate corruption of all classes of natives, combined with the ordinary indolence and *laissez-faire* of their employers; afford them continual and ample opportunity for all kinds of cheating and robbery. The indirect expenses of many Indian establishments are therefore often nearly as great as the regular ones. The Bairá will steal the fine and expensive Narghil-ke-taile (cocoa-nut oil) he purveys for the lights; after having charged a heavy per-centage in the original Bazar price. The Kahnsámá;—who is truly the most speculative rogue of the household, and who has large powers, immunities, and privileges; cheats you right and left. Then the *Coachmán* and *Syces* steal the “gram,” a grain given to the horses instead of corn, and charge for more than supplied. The same with the “Boosá” (chopped hay), and other food and stable requisites for the horses and ponies. It is, indeed, one of the greatest difficulties in Calcutta to maintain any real check on the stable department of the establishment; consequently it frequently happens, that although there is an unsparing, and indeed lavish expenditure: the horses are thin, rough, and out of condition. Some of the highest of the Official class, have an

English groom to superintend. Where this is the case, of course, *he* is the "*málik*" (master). No "black niggur," as he calls them, can cheat him. As, however, but few, even Indian magnates, can, or care to, incur so costly a check—the remedy being in point of mere expense much more than the disease—they who do so, are only those who have splendid princely incomes, or who keep horses for racing and other sporting purposes.

Mention has been made of the utter disregard of the beauties of truth displayed by all classes of natives. They really know not what is meant by truth as a virtue. Truth, or falsehood: is to any native,—be he Rájah, or Máharájah, native prince; or gentleman baboo; "Bukkuswalla" (pedler), or Nokur;—the purest matter of convenience. If it suits his interest, or don't thwart any of his schemes; he may speak truth; if not, he lies. And remember, he feels no qualms of conscience in doing so. Rather, indeed, the spirit of insincerity is so deeply imbued in his nature; that a lie,—or at least an evasion,—seems to him to be the proper and ordinary course to pursue.

Among the servants, another awkward peculiarity may be noticed. Call your Bairá,—give him an order to deliver a message, or do something for you. Before you've actually

finished speaking ; he will say, “ Atchá, bote atchá khodavn am jáutá ! ” and off he'll run. Often, nearly always, in a minute or two, he comes back—looking rather foolish—saying, “ Sahib keeya bolá am khoob jántá naye ! ” (“ What did the Sahib say ? I didn't quiet understand.”) This is awfully provoking ; and the only way of preventing it, is to stop their permature bolting ; and make them repeat the order or message desired to be given. However, with all their want of truth, and their propensities for cheating ; they have many good points. They are as a rule quiet, orderly, and very respectful : rarely given to habits of drinking, while, in many instances, they are very trustworthy. This ; remembering our many strictures and philippics against their corruption and venality ; would seem to be a pure contradiction. But so it is.—The same Bairá, who will overcharge you on the price of the *Narghil-ke-taile*, the “ Koila ” (charcoal), for the “ *Ghoosal-ke-pánee* ” (bath water), or the many other things in his department ; if entrusted with a bag of money, say two or three hundred rupees ; will honestly and faithfully take care of it ; accounting strictly for every *pice*,—the smallest of the Indian copper coinage.

“ Qui Hye ” himself can mention in his own experience a peculiar and strong instance

of faithfulness of Indian servants: On leaving Umbállá, at the end of the Punjuab war, for Calcutta; he wished to send on his three horses. The distance, however,—over a thousand miles—made this a most hazardous affair. All his up-country friends tried to dissuade him from so “mad a plan.” He was headstrong, and persisted. He therefore sent the three horses in charge of three Syces and a Bairá, who had been originally his tent Lascar. “Qui Hye” travelled by Palkee and “Gharry-Dák” (there were no railroads then), taking sixteen days to do the distance. Every one said, “You will never see your horses again,” and certainly the chances were much against it. However, a fortnight after his arrival in Calcutta; the Bairá, Syces, and horses all turned up safe and sound; and considering the great distance, in good case and condition.—More need not be said to prove that, spite of their many failings and peculiarities; there is really much good in Indian servants.

CHAPTER VIII.

FAKEERS.

THE ugly, dirty, mysterious-looking, and mischievous fanatical Hindoo, *soi-disant* priest-beggars, who are known by the appellation of *Fakeer*, or *Faquir*—which literally signifies “poor people” — and who, half beggars, half thieves, are ever ready for all sorts of iniquitous proceedings—are met with in all parts of India. Although among them there may be found some really good and holy men; long and varied experience of all the many and conflicting phases of Indian native character, only proves that, as a class, these *Fakeers* are certainly the worst, the most wicked and unscrupulous of all: being ever rife, ready and willing, for almost any crime.

’Tis these horrid-looking mendicant impostors; who lurk about the “kom-pound”-ground of your Bungalow; and under the cloak of their pretended holiness, examine and pry into every nook and corner, finding out all the weak points of the premises; the character and disposition of the Nokurs; the habits and

customs of the Sahib and family; in fact,—all and everything in the way of information for future, if not present, robbery.

At the best, they are fanatical and intolerant in the extreme; and in the cause of their religious creed, they will not hesitate at the perpetration of any deed, however heinous. The best class of Hindoo domestic servants, and most if not all the Mohammedans, have little or no sympathy with these filthy, malevolent and truculent rogues. The ordinary and regular dupes of the Fakeer, are the foolish and grossly ignorant women of the poorer class of Hindoo village *Ryots*. These are their sure prey, upon whom they will live in the enjoyment of comparative luxuries; while the poor ignorant women and their families may be suffering the greatest privations.

It, however, sometimes unfortunately happens,—particularly in out of the way, up-country, or "Mofussill" stations,—that some of the Hindoo servants are led astray by the sanctimonious words and prayers of these beggar-thief-priests! When this is the case, mischief and robbery, if not worse, is sure to happen. There's no knowing *when*, but come it will, whenever these wretches manage,—as they frequently do—to "get round" some poor credulous Dhye, Ayah or Punkah-Coolie. Should the Sahib hear of this, he will be on

the alert—put all the Nokurs on their guard:—for “Look out for squalls!” and “Qui-vive” must be the watchword for many days and weeks to come. There is, however, little or no inconvenience—and certainly no danger—from these dirty gentry in Calcutta, or the other Presidency Cities of Bombay or Madras; or in any of the large stations. In those places, all houses or Bungalows,—at all events those belonging to Europeans of any tolerable means and position,—have strong and sturdy *Durwáns* (gate-keepers) who may be safely depended on to guard their Sahib’s premises from all intrusion. No native can pass the *Durwán*, without being known, or who cannot give a good and satisfactory account of himself. A dirty Fakeer would stand no chance of escaping the sharp eyes and thick heavy knob-stick of any good *Durwán*. But in most “up-country” stations, the Bungalows—’tis in the *Mofussil* that you have these real Oriental-looking thatched roof “*Eck-telou*” (one-storied) dwellings—have but seldom more than a “*Kutchá*” (mud-wall), about three or four feet high, surrounding it. This boundary wall has often a mere opening—without door, fence or gate—for horses and conveyances to pass through. Indeed, there is scarcely a gate of any kind, except at the “Judge Sahib’s,”—“Collector Sahib’s,”—

or “Magistrate Sahib ko ghur”; while — as is the ordinary custom all over India, nay, nearly all through the East,—the doors and windows of every dwelling place are open day and night. Thus,—they are easily entered by anyone so disposed. 'Tis indeed curious to remark; that, with all these great facilities for burglary; how seldom—very seldom—it happens in India that anything of the kind occurs. The prestige of the English *Sahib-logue* for pluck and daring bravery, against all sorts of odds; with their well-known character for not standing “any nonsense,” may have something to do with this almost peculiar immunity.

Then, also, Hindoos and Mohammedans, are all deeply imbued with the feeling of faithfulness to their “*Neemuk*” (salt); and to be called by their Sahib and Master a “*Neemuk-Kráb*” or “Bad-salt,” is an infamous reproach to any Native, no matter what his position, creed, or caste is. So, the ordinary good and staunch Nokurs will rarely, if ever, give any encouragement to the dirty, grimy, and often loathsomelooking Fakeers. On the contrary, they have frequently been known to hunt the priestly imposters from their Sahib’s “Kompound”; often setting the dogs of the place to “chevy” them away; and which, on such occasions, those faithful canine guardians do most speedily and

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effectually. Dogs,—especially if they've any good, pure and unmixed English blood in them,—have an utter aversion and undying enmity against all the Fakeer clique. They really seem to know them for the rogues and vagabonds they are. It is therefore a real stampede,—*sauve qui peut*, and “De'il tak' the hindmost!” if any of the rascals venture to show themselves inside the low “*Kutchá*” (walls) of a Bungalow where there are dogs. For then,—off scampers *Ram Ghose* or *Peer Hosein*, the Fakeer; with “Tiger,” “Prince,” and “Pincher,” barking, yelping, and bounding after him. *They* seldom let him go without some souvenir or trophy of the fray, in the shape of one or two dirty bits of his scanty “langootie” or “dhotie” (clothing). 'Tis not much they wear;—the narrowest piece of waist-cloth, indeed, being generally their “full dress.” As a rule, Messieurs *Ram Ghose*, *Peer Hosein & Co.*, with others of the ilk of Fakeers, soon get to hear at which of the Sahib's Ghurs dogs—particularly if they're “Belátee-Kooturs” (European dogs),—are kept; and so give them a wide berth.

As to their fanaticism and pleasure in stirring up mischief: 'tis a well-known fact, that Hindoo Fakeers, with some of the lower class of Mohammedan Moolvies (Priests) were the constant medium of communication for most

of the plots, treachery, cruelty, and murders of the " Mutiny ! " They are indeed notorious for all sorts of wickedness. They are licentious and sensual ; fanatical and cruel ; ignorant, filthy, avaricious and greedy ! Many of their acts of pretended holiness are often indecent ; while frequently they are known to commit offences of the most scandalous nature.

In former times, under the old rule of the Hindoo Princes of the Mogul dynasty, these people had great and extraordinary power, liberty and privileges. They indeed arrogated to themselves the title of *Mendicant Philosophers* ! They were also known as " Gogys," " Gioghies," or " Senassies." Large bodies, or armies, of ten or twelve thousand of idle and pretended devotees would assemble ; and, under the plea of making religious tours or pilgrimages to certain of the sacred Hindoo temples, would lay whole districts and provinces under contribution. These pretended saints—for such they called themselves—wore no clothes ; and, indeed, marched about in a perfectly nude state. They were strong and hardy ; and, in those *religious progresses*, were very successful in converting to their own uses the wives of the less holy part of the community. It, indeed, appears that, when this sensual army or horde of naked saints directed their march towards any particular Temple,

the men of the provinces through which their road lay, would very often abandon their houses and fly before them ; notwithstanding their *holy* sanctified character. On the other hand, 'tis, however, said, that the feminine portion of the community were generally more resolute, and not only remained in their dwellings, but frequently applied for the prayers of these *holy persons*, who were—'tis also said—found to be particularly efficacious in cases of sterility. Whenever a holy Gogy or Fakeer was engaged in prayers with a lady of the house ; he left his "*jooties*" (shoes) or his "*lakree*" (staff) at the door ; which—if prudently seen—effectually prevented their devotions being disturbed. Should, however, it unfortunately happen that these warning signals of devotion were not seen, or not properly respected ; the inevitable consequence to the purblind sceptic was a sound drubbing at the hands of the offended robust priest ; and which the poor intruder dared not attempt to resent !

To what a low and degraded state of superstitious priest-ridden thralldom, must these poor Hindoo Villagers have been reduced ; to have permitted such a miserably gross state of things ! What could possibly be more humiliating than to know that these hard working industrious *Ryots* were really subject to the hideous oppression of such an insolent mass

of impostors, as these hordes of saintly sensualists. Of course,—conduct such as described, only ordinarily applied to the families of the lowest and poorest classes. Rarely could they obtain admission anywhere else. Even among the middle class of Natives—saying nothing of the higher, as being entirely out of the question—the restrictions of the "Purdah" or "Hareem," so jealously and tenaciously guarded and maintained by all; would always render abortive the plotting of the most clever and holiest of Fakeers. For should the superstitious dread of the power over good and evil, these fanatical and unscrupulous rogues laid claim to, gain them admittance, the *Purdah-ke-Beebies* (ladies of the Hareem) were, and are, always too strictly watched and guarded to permit the priestly vagabond gaining anything beyond the alms, that on such occasions were most freely given.

Though they were in those times ever ready—and able—to enforce, if necessary, with their arms, that respect and reverence that Hindoos, especially of the lower orders ordinarily have for them; they were also equally cunning and ready to increase this respect and consideration by inflicting on themselves voluntary penances and tortures of most extraordinary and peculiar character. Thus,—they sometimes would hold up one of their

arms, in a fixed position continually for months, until it became quite rigid; so much so, that it would remain in that miserable condition all the rest of their lives! Some again clenched their fists very hard and kept them so until the nails would actually grow into the palms of their hands. Others would turn their face over one shoulder, keeping it constantly so until fixed in that position, and thus for ever after only looked in that one direction. Again, some would turn their eyes looking to the point of their nose, until they entirely lost the power of seeing in any other way or direction. These last, pretended—or perhaps in some instances believed—they saw what they called “Sacred fire;” which vision, if seen, or really believed to have been seen at all; doubtless proceeded from some disorder of the eye caused by their unnatural distortion of the optic nerve. It is often a matter of some considerable amusement to Europeans, particularly English gentlemen, to converse with these distorted and almost naked *Philosophers*. They certainly, in many instances, exhibit an extraordinary contrast in their knowledge and learning, and their miserably distorted and maimed appearance. For,—though the greater number are the merest ignorant and roguish impostors, there are certainly many among them who are really learned,—sincerely

religious,—and honest. Some are, indeed, truly all and exactly what they seem to be;—fanatical enthusiasts! Thus much must be said, if only in justice to those,—however few they may be,—who are sincere in their belief and profession of holiness. The greater number, however, merely assume the character of sanctity, as a cloak to their evil intentions, and for the furtherance of their selfish and sordid interests,—their vanity,—and sensual pleasures. What makes them, however, a perfect nuisance to many of the poorer natives, and the aversion of all the poor husbands, is—that the foolish, ignorant women are actually led and induced to believe that they derive some holiness to themselves from an intimacy with one of these filthy hypocrites.

There are many other strange and absurd customs peculiar to these mendicant impostors. It must though here be mentioned, that among the lowest class of Hindoos, there is so much ignorance and stupidly gross fanaticism; that on the occasion of the Native “*poojás* ;” (festivals held in honour of their Pagan “*Gods or Goddesses*,” their *Kálee*—their *Khrishná*,—their “*Juggernaut*,”) not only the Fakeers, but many others are constantly found, who, in a state of delirious excitement and intoxication from the combined effects of religious frenzy and deep

draughts of the maddening "*Bang*" and "*Arrack*" (very strong native distilled spirits) will even rival, if not surpass, the Fakeers by inflicting on themselves the most hideous pain and torture.

The half-mad, half-drunken "swinging" devotees of the "*Churruck-poojah*" are to this day miserably glaring examples of the insensibility or indifference to pain evinced by many of the lowest class of Hindoos. During this "*Churruck-poojah*" they may be seen suspended at a height of ten or twelve feet: sometimes by the shoulder-blade,—sometimes by the middle,—from sharp iron or steel hooks fastened to the end of a long beam of wood. This beam is made to revolve with some velocity; whirling round the enthusiastic victim; who, indeed, is so borne up by vanity, or intoxicated with drink: that not only does he seem quite insensible of the pain, which must be great, but very often he blows a trumpet or other wind instrument, or perhaps beats a "*Tom-tom*" (native drum), while he is actually being whirled about and bleeding on the sharp iron hooks. Sometimes, he will even sing a "*Gheet*" (song) to the gaping and admiring multitude below; who, the more he bleeds,—the more violently he is whirled about,—so much the more do they admire and applaud his devotion and fortitude. This ridiculous

and truly demoralizing custom of whirling about in mid-air, these poor misguided half-mad drunken wretches, is said to be done in commemoration of a martyr, who they are led to believe, was in that manner tortured to death for his faith. Various other reasons have been given by different writers for the prevalence of these self-tormenting ceremonies—but the best which has been offered seems to be the idea that the patient endurance of such voluntary punishments may serve as an atonement for the sins of the sufferer; and that the repetition of the tortures may wean them by degrees from all worldly pleasures, and enable them to "fix their attentions on the Deity alone; and to employ their whole faculties in the contemplation of that Being who alone is worthy to fill the mind of man with awe, veneration, respect and love." This is the language of those, who are the exceptionally good *Fakeers*. But still, 'tis quite certain, that many Fakeers and others have practised, or pretended to practise, astonishing acts of self-torture: so that, under the cloak of holiness and extreme sanctity, they might obtain for themselves full indulgence of their sensual appetites; with also a gratification of that thirst for fame, which, in such variety of shapes and ways, exist in the human mind. In defiance of the repeated proofs of the

grossest imposition, numbers of these devotees have still the reputation of being only actuated by motives of the purest piety. Indeed, in consequence of this opinion, they are not only held in high esteem and veneration, but they are supposed to be really capable of performing "miracles," great numbers of which—many of them doubtless being mere feats of jugglery, at which they are most expert—are attributed to these pain enduring Fakeers.

While, however, on the subject of "miracles,"—mention must be made of the Hindoo ordeal trials of molten lead! An author, at the end of the last century, thus writes of this—to say the least—curious affair:—"The *ordeal trials* of melted lead and boiling oil, are continually practised: and that, too, without the slightest appearance of fraud or imposition. It is, indeed, asserted, that several of the heads or chiefs of the English settlements in India, have exerted their utmost endeavours to detect any collusion, or attempt to impose on the credulity of the bigoted Hindoos. To this end, they have caused the party that was to undergo the ordeal, not only to be locked up in their own Guard-room or Prison, but they have seen the hand which was to be plunged into the molten or boiling oil, bound up with a handkerchief or bandage, close and tightly bound round the wrist, and sealed with their own seals, which

remained unbroken till the instant of the public ceremony. Notwithstanding this and every other precaution which the most determined incredulity and suspicion of fraud could devise; they were quite unable to detect any trick or juggle, or make any discovery which could lead even to a confirmation of that suspicion which must naturally arise in the minds of those who cannot possibly suppose that the Almighty will thus depart from His immutable laws, for the mere settlement of questions, which in every other part of the globe are only decided by the testimony of witnesses to the crime supposed to be committed."

The ceremony of this ordeal was performed with great solemnity. The party who appealed to the trial, for his innocence;—whether on suspicion of murder, theft, conjugal infidelity of their woman, or of even denying a debt:—was publicly brought to the side of the fire, on which was placed a cauldron full of boiling oil or molten lead. The Rajah—Chief Judge—or Magistrate being present, the hand of the suspected party was clean washed, and a leaf of the barb tree, with the accusation written on it, was fastened round his or her waist. Then, —after a solemn invocation of the Deity by a Brahmin-Priest,—the party plunged in their hand, scooping up the boiling, bubbling fluid! If he drew it out unhurt he was absolved;

otherwise he was punished as prescribed by the laws for the crime of which he was accused. So firmly was this method of purgation believed in, that even some of the Indian Christian converts have been known to voluntarily submit their causes to its decision.

Of this certainly extraordinary ordeal Qui-Hye has no personal knowledge. All he knows is, that the Hindoo generally—and the Bengalee in particular—are wonderfully clever and apt at all feats of dexterity and *legère-de-main*: for they are indeed light-handed and light-fingered. What with this manual dexterity, and the cleverness of Messieurs the Brahmins and their friends the Fakeers, he is certainly chary of believing in the molten-lead or boiling-oil trick, without partaking of more than ordinary *grains of salt*. It must be also remembered that, Ramo-Samee, the Indian Juggler, can hold his own alongside any Houdin,—Dr. Lynn,—Wizard of the North,—or Maskelyn and Cook:—and the dirty Fakeer—in many instances,—often shows he has some knowledge of—and practical aptitude for—Jugglery.

CHAPTER IX.

"CHORES" AND "DACOITS."

"CHORES"—are thieves. "*Dacoits*"—are much the same—*arcades ambo*—though of a higher or bolder class, being burglars and highway robbers.

Among some of these professors of the art so oblivious of the claims and rights of *meum* and *teum*; are to be found *conveyancers* of—other people's—property, certainly the most clever, dexterous, and expert in the world. Some of the exploits of an East-Indian *Chore* or *Dacoit*, particularly the up-country ones—those of the Lower Provinces, not ordinarily attaining to the high excellence and really wonderful dexterity of the N. W. P. (North West Provinces):—are so cleverly done, as to be considered by many almost miraculous and impossible. In most of the instances here mentioned of the extraordinary and wonderful facility these *Chores* have of abstracting property with impunity almost before your eyes: the Author's personal knowledge and experience is vouched for their strict veracity. This personal experience is, of course, not of the

present day. No! 'tis of times and events long since passed away.—'Twas, indeed, in the old Sikh or Punjuab Campaign of 1848-9, of which "Qui-Hye" has spoken in the earlier of these "Jottings." It was during the almost incessant Marches: hard, heavy, and fatiguing; that succeeded the surrender of the rebel *Dewan* Moolraj, and the fall of Mooltan: when the Bombay division of the Punjuab Force, under old General Ahmuty, was hurriedly making such strenuous efforts to join Lord Gough at Goojerat:—that this personal experience of the Indian *Chore* and *Dacoit* was gained.—Some of the halting-places had so notorious and bad a reputation for its being the haunts of these truly light-fingered—*legère-de-main*—gentry: that it was quite common to receive some ominous warning from the *Baira*, *Sais*, or *Tent-Lascar*, of the excellent chance the "*Khodavun*, *Gurreeb-Purvoe*, *Sahib*" would have of being "looted." They would say, "*Dekho Sahib*, *Khoob Kobbedar!*" ("Mind, Sir! take great care!") "*Chore logue*, *bote hye!*" ("Plenty thieves here!") Now,—though "Qui-Hye" had good reason for knowing that this report was really very often but too true, and that *Chores* were plentifully about: he at the same time knew very well that one's own *Sais* or *Tumboke Lascar* were not always above doing a

little amateur " Chorey " on their own account.

On such an occasion, " Qui-Hye,"—being rather a cool and old hand—would call in the servants and address them thus : " Now, *Bhye* (Brothers), it appears there are *bote* (plenty) *Chore-logue* (thief-people) here." " *Ahn Khodāvun!*" hastily cry the excited *Nokurs* " *sutch bát* " ('tis true). " Well," Q. H. replies : " we must be cautious then, so look here : *Joku* "—turning to the *Bairá*—" *àmerà tulwà lao* (bring me my sword) and we'll place it *teeàree hye* (ready here) by the side of my Charpoy ; " and so saying, he would unsheath a sharpened-edged and pointed Peshawur sword he always kept by him, and place it by his camp-bed ready to his hand. Then, turning to the sturdy, active *Saises*, he says : " Come here, *Mookin* ; hand me that *Chotà-bundook* (Pistol, but literally 'little gun'), and we'll load it ready for the *Chores* when they come." So " Qui-hye " makes *Mookin* bring the pistol—a good, though rather old fashioned, double barrellled one :—then tells *Kàlu*, the other *Sais*, to hand the powder-flask ;—*Joku*, to hold the *goolies* (balls)—while *Lall-Mohammed* brings the wads. Thus,—all the *Nokurs* are made to assist actively in loading there *Sahib's chotà bundook*. When all is finished, he says, " *Dekho, khoob semál kero* "

(be very careful) *sub nokur-logue* (all you servants); keep very quiet outside the *tumbo* (tent) to night: for," continues Qui-Hye, "if I hear any stir or movement anywhere I'll let fly and fire in that direction." "*Ahn, Sahib!*" they all reply, "*Am logue Khoob chip-chop Kurringá*" (we'll all be perfectly quiet)." And so—in the course of the night, to show he was on the alert,—he was a very light sleeper—and that he would stand no tricks, being determined—if he could help it—not to be robbed; he would hail them with a sudden shout of "*Khone hye!*" ("Who's there!") At which startling cry the frightened Nokurs—in fear of the Sahib sending a shot amongst them, would instantly call out "*Kol-lee ám logue be hye Sahib,—oure qui naye*" (" 'Tis only us, Sahib—no one else").—Curiously enough, this had the desired effect. No Chore troubled Qui-Hye. His goods and chattels were not disturbed: while many of his friends, the Officers of the 60th Rifles, were effectually despoiled of some things, that on "the March" acquire a value far above there marketable or intrinsic price; which, of course, is greatly enhanced by the difficulty—nay, impossibility of replacing them.

Loud would be the complaints—deep the bewailings of the unlucky victims.—Qui-Hye may have been peculiarly lucky. On the



"BUDDHIK."—A HIGHWAY ROBBER.

other hand, he may have been merely protected by that combination of chance and destiny, or *fate*—the Hindoo's "*Kismet*," that so wonderfully, nay providentially, saves one while it destroys the other immediately next him. Or, perhaps, his *genees* (property) was not sufficiently attractive. Be that as it may, —he and his goods escaped with impunity, while many of his friends in adjoining Tents were well plucked. He, however, always persists in chuckling—impudent fellow as he is—over, what he presumes as, his alert, cool, and "clever diplomacy." This, though, by-the-by, is no evidence or illustration of the exceptional and really extraordinary dexterity of the true professional Indian *chore*. It is a well known fact, and in the experience of the writer, that English Officers, and others, have frequently been robbed while sleeping in their tents, of their *Kummels* (blankets), *Chuddahs* (sheets), and *Rejais* (counterpanes) covering them; without being awakened or disturbed! —This daring trick they are supposed to perform—indeed we have evidence of *Chores* who have "peached"—by their lulling the tired sleeper into deeper repose, by gently fanning him with a small hand-*punkah*.—Then lightly tickling the sleeper with a feather on one side of the face, he is gradually induced to turn about; so that the under, as well as the upper

bed-clothes have been actually abstracted. The dismay of the poor victims,—who, by-the-by, must be rather heavy sleepers—on awakening to find themselves cold (you can be cold in a Tent on a night in Upper India in December or January) and so wonderfully despoiled : may be truly more easily imagined than described.

As for saddles, bridles, surcingles, whips, boxes, dressing-bags, and in fact all sorts and kinds of small, loose, and portably property : they would surely and quickly vanish under the clever manipulations of these expert thieves. Besides the mere loss, inconvenience, (which on the March is very great, as little beyond the barest necessities are taken,) and the mortification at being the victims of these juggling depredators ; it is really a matter of some considerable risk and danger, to seize, or attempt to seize, any of these, who are really and literally, very slippery rogues.

For, — when on these expeditions, the Chores strip off the very moderate and scanty clothing they generally wear, which, indeed, rarely includes anything that could be possibly called superfluous,—the lowest class of native seldom wearing anything at all beyond the “*dhotee*” (a narrow strip of dingy looking cloth round the loins). So—stark naked, with their bodies well greased : while their hair,—

(generally worn by the Natives, especially Hindoos, very long, and sometimes plaited and turned like the "back hair" of our ladies)—closely cropped and often shaved: there is really nothing to hold them by. Besides—while it is next to an impossibility to seize or hold *them*; they have a formidable, long "*Chooree*" (knife or dagger), of keen and razor-like sharpness, fastened to their right arm. This ugly murderous weapon is so fixed, laying flat on the upper or outer part of the arm, with the sharp point projecting below the elbow: that should the unfortunate party to be robbed awake, and seek to lay hold of the wonderfully agile and slippery ruffian to prevent his escape: one back blow from the bent and armed elbow gives a most dangerous, if not deadly, stab to the pursuer. Thus,—it is very necessary to remember in dealing with these Chores, that at times, "discretion is really the better part of valour." So,—if young "Griff," the newly joined "Sub." of the —th Rifles, should chance to wake up from troubled—though, perhaps, sweet dreams of home and his Lady-love, and peering into the hazy semi-darkness of his dimly-lighted Tent: see a black form crawling and creeping about on the ground: perhaps appropriating his most favourite "*Jin*" (Saddle), or "*Lugaum*" (Bridle); Qui-Hye would earnestly advise

him to keep cool—and if he can't get a good and safe "pot shot" at the rascal—though the chances are, that if placed by the side of his Charpoy, instead of under his pillow—as Qui-Hye always did—his good Pistol or Revolver would be the first thing laid hold of by the daring thief, who prizes our well-made fire-arms almost beyond everything—the next best thing is to remain perfectly quiet, and, indeed, not seek to do what is nearly an impossibility.

Sceptical readers may scornfully exclaim, "How do these wonderful Chores, as you call them, get in the secure and well-guarded tent?" These may be informed that our nude, greasy, well-shaven Chore will crawl on all-fours—hands and knees—for some distance on the ground; passing cautiously and silently through long lines of closely posted guards, pickets and sentries; remaining motionless when they are passing or pacing near, and only moving at intervals, when the sentinel's back is turned. Thus, they will glide serpent-like till arrived at their goal, which, by-the-by, they have well noticed and marked during the day. Probably, that dirty, dusty, half-naked, grimy-looking Gogy or Fakeer, who was seen prowling about the tents after parade in the afternoon, may be your robber-assailant in the night! Or, if not the actual robber—the

Chore or Dacoit—then, his spy and accomplice. The creeping knave, having arrived at his destination ; he either lifts up the canvas wall of the tent, or, if too securely fastened—though that is rarely the case on all sides—he cuts an aperture sufficient for his crawling eel-like entry. Once inside, he is indeed “all there,” ready and willing for anything ; and is truly a very awkward and ugly customer to deal with.

The most wonderful thing in the way of thieving in all Qui-Hye’s long Indian experience, was performed by some “Ghorà ke Choree” (horse-robbers), during the march of the —th Rifles from Pesháwur to Kussowlie in the Hymalayahs. It was somewhere by Rhotas and Attock, the wild strongholds of the brave and hardy Affreedies and Yusofzaies. Indeed, it was in consequence of being obliged to send two different expeditions against these bold and daringly-brave marauders, that had detained the Regiment so late in the year at Peshawur ; until it was only by long and forced marches that the long-yearned-for cool repose of the Sanatarium Hill Station could be reached before the “Hot-Season” was too far advanced. ’Twas after one of these most fatiguing double marches ; every one—Privates, “Non-coms.” and Officers — being quite tired, done-up and knocked-up ; that our

friends the Chores, showed us a taste of their quality. A friend of Qui-Hye's—one with whom he'd "chummed" for many eventful months in the battle-field, camp and march; an old, rough, but good and jolly Officer of the Commissariat department—had a horse, which, though an inveterate kicker, biter, and altogether a most uncanny and vicious character; was a hard-working and never-tiring animal, and a great favourite of old Welsh. The horse was indeed notorious for his demoniac habits of kicking and biting at everyone but his master and Sais. No one else dared go near him. This amiable bit of horse-flesh, a gaunt and bony though powerful beast, was "picketed," as is usual on the "march" in India, by having his hind legs fastened with long ropes to strong wooden pegs firmly driven in the ground behind, while he was secured by the head-stall ropes to other pegs in front. Besides this, a Native Sepoy Sentry was posted quite near, continually pacing up and down, to guard the Government stores. Then, there was the Sais and all the many servants laying close round; while numbers of our smart and active Riflemen of the 60th, as well as the Native pickets, guards, and sentinels, were placed close and in constant communication with each other all round the camp. Anyone would have thought it really impossible for

anything to move with impunity. Yet, wonderful to say though, one morning the horse was gone! Nothing had been heard—nothing seen—by either Native or European Sentry, Guard, or Servant! And yet from the midst of these Sentinels and Pickets, this vicious, kicking, biting brute: who started and snorted at all strangers; was actually quietly taken away! Certainly the night had been dark, and rather stormy, but not so as, under ordinary circumstances—to drown the noise or muffle the footsteps of a horse; much less one so generally lively as our friend, the Commissariat Officer's charger. However, there was the fact, the horse was gone! Everyone stared and looked aghast in the morning when it was known. But nothing could we make or understand of so extraordinary an occurrence.

Colonel,—now General Sir George St. Patrick Lawrence, and brother of Lord Lawrence—was then in our Camp, marching up with us, his old friends the 60th Rifles: and he, from long experience, well knowing the course of proceeding of these expert thieves: he being, indeed, what we call in India a "*Sub-jantā-walla*" (one that knows everything), advised our Commandant, Colonel Bradshaw—who was awfully put out and riled about the affair—to issue a notice or proclamation by "*tom-tom*" in the adjacent villages, offering

a reward for the recovery of the Horse. "You'll never get him back," said Colonel Lawrence, "in any other way." Colonel Bradshaw at first wouldn't hear of such a "condoning of felony" as he called it. The owner,—old Lieutenant W——, lately promoted from "Conductor" of Commissariat Department—was, however, so anxious to get his vicious favourite back: that the Colonel at last gave in. Old W——, indeed, was so anxious, and so dearly prized his "*Nut-kut*" (wicked) beast, that he wanted to offer a hundred Rupees (about ten pounds); but Colonel Lawrence knew better, and said, "Oh, no! W——, you leave it to me:" and continued, "I know their "*hikmut*" (ways), and we must not offer too much: so we'll say Fifty Rupees." Well,—we sent in some of our Hindoo Camp-followers with a "Tom-tom" (small Native Drum, which they strike with their fingers), and loudly proclaimed that "*Pechás rupeeá*" (fifty rupees) would be given for the return of Lieutenant W——'s horse; at the same time promising full immunity from punishment or penalty for the robbery. This plan proved as thoroughly successful as Colonel Lawrence had anticipated. In a day or two afterwards,—we had in the meantime gone on with our regular daily, or rather nightly Marches:—in came to our encamp-

ment,—which was then some thirty or thirty-five miles distant from the place where the robbery occurred,—a very wild, ragged, and dirty truculent looking Affreedie, whose long elf-like looking hair and marked features made him anything but nice in appearance or manner. However, this formidable fellow, with much coolness and *sang-froid*, brought in the famous, well-known, bony, black "Shaitán" (Devil), as the kicking brute was called.

Our Affreedie Envoy grinned quietly on receiving the "pechás rupeea," and even had the audacity to ask for "Bukseesh"! Further than that impudence could hardly go. But he didn't get the Bukseesh. By-the-by, the Affreedies had managed somewhat to tame the "devil" a little, although everyone but Lieutenant W——, who joyfully welcomed his old friend, kept at a most respectful distance, particularly from *Shaitán's* hind-legs and mouth. This anecdote is actually true in every particular, and needs no such aid to digestion as the proverbial *granum salis*, generally offered to dispeptic doubters of ordinary "Traveller's Stories."

CHAPTER X.

CALCUTTA—(WITH SKETCH OF ITS HISTORY).

CALCUTTA, the *soi-disant* "City of Palaces," is in many respects well worthy of its seemingly high-flown name. More particularly does it appear so to those who, having on their first arrival in India, landed at Bombay or Madras : remain, perhaps, for years in some of the many far away "up-country" "or Mof-fusil" Stations, only coming up on rare occasions even to the minor Presidency Towns. To these, the first view of the regal city of Calcutta is most interesting and pleasing. The lightness and beauty of this palatial capital is greatly enhanced to those coming by sea from the "Sandheads," up the noble, and, to quote the Natives—especially the Hindoos, who worship it—the "Holy" River Hoogly; by the number of large and elegant buildings, all surrounded by park-like grounds and gardens filled with brilliant, gorgeously coloured flowers, which line the right bank of the sacred river. The real interest of this first glimpse of the watery suburban approach to Calcutta, commences

at Garden Reach. Here,—is a constant succession of charming, light, though cool-looking mansions ; with the large and deep verandahs closed in on all sides by the delicate, sweet-smelling grass " Kuss-Kuss Tatties " (Blinds)—so peculiar to all East Indian dwellings ;—and presenting to the delighted view of the new comer, a most beautiful *coup d'œil*. These River-side houses, with their flower-gardens glowing with the richest colours, dipping down the sloping banks of the river to the very edge of the water, are mostly the residences of those merchant-princes : who, in India, and more particularly in Calcutta, are so rich, magnificent, and powerful. Each of these white, bright-looking palatial garden-mansions so enveloped with lovely shrubs, flowers, noble palm, plantain, date and mango trees ; are so many eye-refreshing spots of beauty in this approach up the Hoogly to the Capital city of Bengal.

But Calcutta is not only the Presidency Town of the Government of Bengal,—the Lieutenant Governor's official residence being at Alipore, one of the Suburbs of Calcutta ;—but is also the capital and seat of the supreme Government of our Indian Empire. Here,—the Viceroy and Governor-General holds his powerful sway. From here, at least for many months in the year—when not at Barrackpore,

a quiet residence of the Governor General, about fifteen miles from Calcutta ; or—during the “ Hot-Season ”—at Simla in the Hymalayah Mountains ;—are issued those orders, proclamations, and edicts of “ the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council ; ”—that, with a mere stroke of the pen, deposes a Kingly Máhárájah, princely Guikwar, or noble Náwaub ! From “ Government House,” Calcutta ;—or, as in official parlance, using the military designation of the capital—“ Fort William ”: are sent those “ Hookums ” (orders) from which there is no appeal ; and, indeed, like the laws of the ancient Medes and Persians, are absolute and final. An order of Earl Dalhousie caused the annexation of that fine country of the brave Sikhs, the Punjuab ! —A proclamation of his successor, Earl Canning : in an instant upset, altered, and did away with all the wonderful traditions, high privileges, and great prestige and power of the famous, world-renowned East India Company, which for so many years—from as far back as Elizabeth, who granted the first Charter, though then only for fifteen years—had been growing in wealth and power of the highest possible character, until it had become the supreme paramount authority of the vast Hindoostan. For, though there were, even to a very late period, “ Great-Moguls ; ”—*soi-*

disant Emperors or Kings of Delhi ;—Máhárájahs of Lahore and the Punjuab ;—with Rájahs, Náwábs, and other noble native Princelings without number, saying nothing of the present rather busy and restless descendent of the once powerful and potent Náwáb-Názims, the princely Viziers of Bengal ;—they were all, more or less, the merest puppets and nonentities ; who could be, and were, at a moments notice, displaced, deposed, or otherwise shelved and politically ignored.

The Governor-Generals of the olden time—ere steamers, railroads, telegraphs, and the " P. and O. Co." were dreamt of—those proud possessors of almost absolute power, which indeed was as unlimited as it was great—had far greater sway than the present " Viceroys and Governor-Generals," great as they undoubtedly are. Steam, rail, and the Suez Canal, have done much to annihilate the distance between England and India, that was in itself a power : while the electric wire, with its constant flash of orders and countermands, has rendered the once almost independent ruler of our enormous Indian territories, a mere resident " Minister for Indian affairs " : continually liable to be checked and controlled ; if not thwarted and snubbed, at every step by the Home Government.

So much for Calcutta as the Seat of Govern-

ment of our vast, varied, and wonderful Indian Empire ; with its agglomerated swarms of rival peoples, races, creeds, and " Castes."—Think only of the bitter rivalries and burning hatred borne by the Mohammedans against Hindoos:—Affghans of Rajpoots:—Sikhs of Bengalees :—and all—in their heart of hearts—of the pale, proud, cool, and strong Feringhees ! Think of all this ;—and then wonder at our sway over these swarming millions : whose class, creed, and caste jealousies : have ever been our safest and never failing bulwark and power.

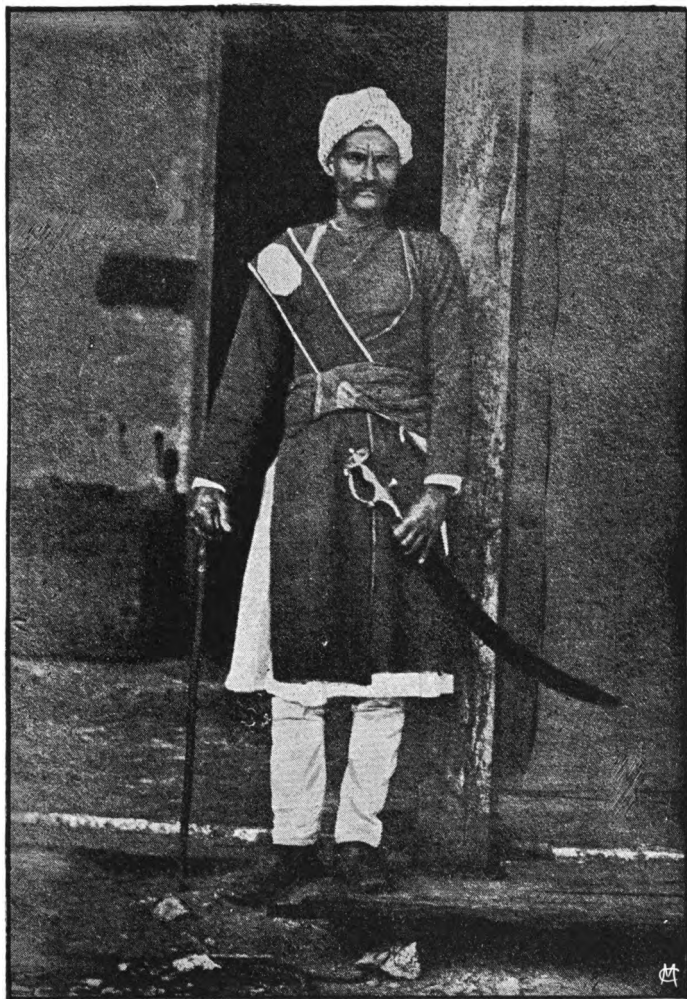
As to the rise and progress of this " City of Palaces ;"—it appears that about 1690, Calcutta, then a mere Native villiage, was purchased from the reigning Nábob, or Náváb-Názim, of Bengal, who sold it with some other tracts of land which surrounded the settlement the East Indian Company then had at Hoogly—or Hugley as it was then called—on a branch of the Ganges some little distance from Calcutta. Its name is derived from "*Kálee*," the Hindoo Goddess of Time, and "*Kuttá*" or "*Cuttá*," a house or temple which stood in the little village of Cálý-Cuttá.—This was the first real acquisition of our territorial possessions in India. From this little—comparitively speaking—spot, has grown and sprung our mighty Eastern Empire ! It was, however,

not till 1717, that Calcutta was made a Residency independent of Madras, which was then our Indian head quarters and seat of the East Indian Company's Government. In 1717, a small extension of territory, and certain privileges of exemption from duties throughout the Empire, then under the rule of the "Great Mogul;" was obtained for the annual payment of the ridiculously small, almost nominal, payment of twelve hundred pounds! At this time, Jaffier Káhn, who was the then Náwáb-Názim—or "*Nábob*" as we then called him—of Bengal; had prevailed on the Emperor to annex Orissá to that Government. 'Tis from Orissa that we get our "*Palkee*," or Palanquin, bearers, who are generally all "*Ooriahs*," as the natives of Orissá are called. Behar, also, which, with Orissá, had previously been separate Native Governments, was at this time made part of the powerful Náwáb-Názim's rule. He then removed his residence from Dacca, near Calcutta, to Moorsshedabad, a much greater distance, and which place for many years remained the principal seat of Government of so much of the province of Bengal not possessed by the Company.

On the death of this Prince in 1725, he was succeeded by his Son-in-law, Sujáh Dowlah: and this Náwaub dying in 1739, Seffrah, or Seffrez Khán, his Son, assumed the powers

of Government, which now began to be considered hereditary. However, — Annáverdi Khán,—an inferior Chief and Governor of one of the Provinces under the Náváb—having aspired to that office, excited a Rebellion; and having vanquished the raw, undisciplined troops of Seffrá Khán, in a Battle in which that Náváb lost his life: Annáverdi Khan, at once seized his position and authority.

This was in 1742:—and he maintained himself against all attempts to dispossess him, until his Death in April, 1756, when he was succeeded by his next heir, the Grandson of his Brother, and who was that notoriously brutal tyrant, *Surájá al Dowlá*, the half-mad, half-foolish, but wholly cruel Náwaub-Názim, who permitted, if he did not actually order, the horrid outrage on Mr. Holwell, the then Chief or Governor of the English “Factory,” with 146 others in the miserable den, now remembered as the BLACK HOLE PRISON of Calcutta.



A NATIVE POLICEMAN IN HIS UNIFORM.

CHAPTER XI.

THE “BLACK HOLE PRISON !”—(MR. HOLWELL AND
SURAJA AL DOWLA IN 1756.)

How short-sighted generally are all wicked Tyrants!—In this, it certainly was so. For the effect of the outrageous cruelty on Mr. Holwell and his poor companions; was to make us—and soon too, for the *Nemesis* of retribution came most speedily — actually much more powerful than we ever were before!—In fact,—from this point: the real history of *Calcutta*,—nay, the EAST INDIA COMPANY—which up to now, were both comparatively unknown, and politically, almost insignificant; commences, and is at once replete with interest of the highest character. Hitherto,—our interference in Indian public matters had been indeed rather cautious, private, and insidious:—than actual or open.—The Civil Servants of the “Company”—were then known merely as “Writers.” Remember! the great and brave General Lord Clive—the heroic conqueror of Plassey—the real founder of our now great and noble Indian Empire;—was originally, only a mere poor

and humble Clerk or "Writer" in the "Factory" or Settlement of the English Company! Well, these Civilians had, from time to time, furnished the different Native Princes,—who were nearly always contending with each other,—with Stores, Arms, and Ammunition; and at critical conjunctures, had made advantageous agreements for increase of Territory, and remission of the customary payments. Permission had also been given, though most sparingly, for Englishmen to enter the service of the Návábs, and who had generally ample opportunities for making their fortunes.

The time now came when we could act more decisively. Surájá al Dowlá had no sooner assumed the Government of Bengal, than he entered on plans, which he had determined on, to crush the growing, and even now formidable, power of the hated "Feringhees." Pretending to have received various insults from the Governor and Council of Calcutta, and in particular by the imprisonment of Omichund, a rich Hindoo Merchant of great eminence and influence, and one of his especial dependents; he levied an Army, and in the end of 1756, invested our settlements at Cassimbazar, which is somewhat higher up the River Hoogly. Finding a greater resistance than he had expected, or believed possible, he got the Chief Officer of

the “ Factory ” into his hands by a stratagem, and then compelled him to sign an order for the immediate surrender of the place, as a ransom for his life.

After some deliberation, the members of the “ Factory ” who remained consented, on the 4th of June, to rescue their Chief from his dangerous position, by giving up to Surájá al Dowlá, a large amount of goods, stores, and ammunition. Having now so far effected his purpose, the Náwáb marched on Calcutta, and invested Fort William with an army of 70,000 horse and foot Soldiers. He fully announced his intention of expelling the “ *Belátee-logae* ” (English people) entirely from the Province of Bengal. He arrived on the 15th, and immediately attacked one of the Redoubts at the commencement of the Town. This was, however, so very vigorously defended, that he was repulsed with great loss. Nor was his second attempt on the following day attended with better success. He, however, persevered, and renewed the attack on the 18th, when the small force of the Company, overwhelmed by the enormous superiority of numbers, were obliged to abandon the out-works, and retire into the Fort. Here, being wholly unprovided with means for a long resistance, the Governor and some others made their escape to some Ships in the River:

leaving Mr. Holwell in Command. He most bravely held out till the 20th, and then was obliged,—through the treachery of the Dutch guard admitting the enemy at a back gate—to surrender at discretion, just as he was endeavouring by a parley from the walls to obtain favourable terms of capitulation.—The scene following this unfortunate forced surrender, is emphatically and minutely described by the graphic pen of the brave Mr. Holwell, who was providentially one of the few who came alive out of the *Black Hole*! His account of the terrible event is, indeed, so vivid, clear, and interesting, that little excuse, if any, is required for reproducing it:

“The Subah—or Viceroy of Bengal and his troops,” says Mr. Holwell, “were in full possession of the Fort before six o’clock in the evening. At an interview with him about 7 o’clock, he repeated his assurances to me, on the word of a Soldier, that no harm should come to us. Indeed, I believe his orders—at least, at first—were only general: that we should be ‘safely secured for the night;’ and that what actually followed was, in a great measure, the result of revenge and resentment of the Jemautdars (Native Officers), to whose cruelty we were delivered. Be this as it may,—as soon as it was dark; we were all, without distinction of rank, position, age, or

sex; directed by the Guard set over us, to collect ourselves into one body, and sit down under the arched verandah or piazza to the west of the Black Hole Prison. Just as it became dark a large number of Soldiers, who had been drawn up on the Parade, advanced and made us all rise and go into the Barracks, to the left of the Court of Guard. We were no sooner all within them, than the Guard advanced to the inner arches and parapet wall, and, with their muskets presented, ordered us to go into the room at the southernmost end of the Barracks, commonly called the Black Hole Prison. Few amongst us, the Soldiers excepted, had the least idea of the dimensions or nature of a place we had never seen, and hardly heard of; for, if we had, we should certainly have rushed upon the Guard, and been, as the lesser evil, by our own choice, cut to pieces."

"Among the first to enter were myself, Messrs. Baillie, Jenks, Cooke, T. Coles; Ensigns Scott, Revely, Law, and Buchanan. I got possession of the window nearest the door: and Messrs. Coles and Scott got into the window with me, they being both badly wounded, the first I believed mortally. The rest of the above-named gentlemen were all close round me.—It was now about 8 o'clock.—Figure to yourself, my friend, if possible, the

dreadful situation of a hundred and forty-six wretches, exhausted by continual fatigue and action, crammed all together in a cube of eighteen feet on a hot night in Bengal; shut up from the East and South,—the only points from whence air could reach us—by dead walls; and by a wall and door on the North, and open only to Westward by two windows strongly barred with iron, from which we could receive scarce any circulation of fresh air.”

“What must ensue appeared to me in lively and dreadful colours the instant I cast my eyes around and saw the size and situation of the room. Many unsuccessful attempts were made to force the door: for having only our hands to work with, and the door opening inward: all our endeavours were vain and fruitless.—”

“Amongst the Guards posted at the window I observed an old Jemmautdar near me, who seemed to carry some compassion for us in his countenance. I called him to me, and pressed him to endeavour to get us separated, half in one place and half in another, and said that he should, in the morning, receive a Thousand Rupees for this act of kindness. He withdrew; but in a few minutes returned and told me it was impossible. I then thought I had been deficient in my offer, and

promised him two Thousand. He withdrew a second time, but returned soon, and—with I believe much real pity and compassion—told me that it could not be done but by the Subah's order: and that no one dare wake him!—”

“We had been here but a few minutes, before every one fell into a perspiration, so profuse, you can form no idea of it. This brought on a raging thirst: which increased in proportion as the body was drained of its moisture.”

“Various expedients were thought of to give more room and air. To obtain the former, it was moved to put off our clothes. This was approved as a happy notion: and in a few minutes, I believe every man was stripped: myself, Mr. Court, and the two young gentlemen by me, excepted. For a little time they flattered themselves with having gained a mighty advantage. Every hat was set in motion to produce a circulation of air: and Mr. Baillie proposed that every man should sit down on his hams. This expedient was several times put in practice, and at each time, many of the poor creatures whose natural strength was less than that of others, or who had been more exhausted, and could not recover their legs as others did when the word was given to rise: fell,—to rise no more! They were instantly trodden to

death, or suffocated. When the whole body sat down, they were so closely wedged together, that they were obliged to use many efforts before they could put themselves in motion to get up again."

"Before nine o'clock every man's thirst grew intolerable, and respiration was difficult. Efforts were again made to force the door,—but in vain. Many insults were used to the Guards to provoke them to fire in upon us. For my own part, I hitherto felt little pain or uneasiness, but what resulted from my anxiety for the sufferings of the others. By keeping my face between two of the bars I obtained air enough to give my lungs easy play, though my perspiration was excessive, and thirst tormenting. At this period, so strong a urinous volatile effluvia came from the prison, that I was not able to turn my head that way for more than a few seconds at a time."

"Now, every body, excepting those situated near the windows, began to be outrageous, and many delirious. 'Water! Water!' became the general cry: and the old Jemmautdar, before mentioned, taking pity on us, ordered the people to bring some skins of water. This was what I dreaded. I foresaw it would prove the ruin of the small chance left us, and essayed many times to speak to him privately

to forbid its being brought. The noise and clamour was, however, so loud, it became impossible.—The water appeared.—Words cannot paint to you the universal agitation and raving the sight of it threw us into. I flattered myself that some, by preserving an equal temper of mind, might outlive the night:—but, now, the reflection which gave the greatest pain was, that I saw no possibility of any escaping to tell the dismal tale.”

“ Until the water came; I, myself, had not suffered so much from thirst, which instantly became excessive. We had no means of conveying it into the prison, but by hats forced through the bars: and thus, myself, and Messrs. Coles and Scott—notwithstanding the pains they suffered from their wounds—supplied them as fast as possible. Those, however, who have ever experienced intense thirst, or are acquainted with the cause and nature of this appetite; will be sufficiently sensible it could receive no more than a temporary alleviation. The cause, the horrible cause, still subsisted. Though we brought full hats within the bars; there ensued such violent struggles and contests to get at it; that before it reached the lips of any one, there would be scarcely a small tea-cupful left in it. These supplies, like sprinkling water on fire, only served to feed and raise the flame. Oh! my

dear Sir,—how shall I give you a conception of what I felt at the cries and ravings of those in the remoter parts of the prison, who could not entertain a hope of obtaining a drop, yet could not divest themselves of expectation, however unavailing; and calling on me by the tender considerations of friendship and affection, and who knew that they were really dear to me! Think, if possible, what my heart must have suffered, at seeing and hearing their distress, without having it in my power to relieve them.”

“The confusion now became general and horrid! Several quitted the other window—the only chance they had for life—to force their way to the water; and the throng and press upon our window was fearful and almost beyond bearing. Many, forcing their passage from farther parts of the room, pressed down those in their way who had less strength, and trampled them to death!”

“From about nine to eleven I sustained this cruel scene and painful situation: still supplying them with water, though my legs were almost broke with the weight brought against them. By this time I was, myself, nearly pressed to death; and my two companions, with Mr. William Parker—who had forced himself into the window—were really so.”

“For a great while, they all preserved a

respect and regard for me—more than, indeed, I could well expect, our circumstances being considered;—but now, all distinction was lost. My friend Baillie; Messrs. Jenks, Revelly, Law, Buchanan, Simpson, and several others, for whom I had a real esteem and affection, had been lying *dead at my feet!* and they were now trampled upon by every corporal and common soldier, who, by the help of their more robust constitutions, had forced their way to the window, and held fast by the bars over me: till at last I became so pressed and wedged up, that I was deprived of all motion.”

“Determined now to give up everything, I called to them, and begged, as the last instance of their regard, that they would remove the pressure upon me, and permit me to retire out of the window—to die in quiet. They gave way; and with much difficulty I forced a passage into the centre of the prison, where the throng was less, through the many dead—then amounting to *one-third*—and the number who flocked to the windows, for by this time they had water at the other window.”

“In the Black-Hole there is a platform raised between three or four feet from the floor, open underneath, and extending the whole length of the east side of the prison. It was six feet wide, corresponding with that in the barrack. I travelled over the dead

bodies, and repaired to the farther end of it, just opposite to the other window. Here, my poor friend, Mr. Edward Eyre, came staggering over the dead to me ; and, with his usual coolness and good-nature, asked me how I did. He fell and expired before I had time to make him a reply ! I laid myself down on some of the dead behind me on the platform ; and, recommending myself to Heaven, had the comfort of thinking my sufferings could have no long duration.”

“ My thirst grew now unsupportable, while the difficulty of breathing much increased. I had not remained in this situation, I believe, ten minutes, when I was seized with a pain in my breast, and palpitation of the heart, both to the most exquisite degree. These roused and obliged me to get up again ; but still the pain, palpitation, thirst, and difficulty of breathing, increased. I retained my senses notwithstanding, and had the grief to see death not so near me as I had hoped. But I could no longer bear the pain I suffered, without attempting a relief, which I knew fresh air would and could only give me. I instantly determined to push for the window opposite to me ; and, by an effort of double the strength I had ever before possessed, I gained the third rank at it, with one hand seized a bar, and by that means gained the second, though I think

there were at least six or seven ranks between me and the window."

"In a few moments the pain, palpitation, and difficulty of breathing, ceased; but my thirst continued intolerable. I called for water, 'For God's sake!' I had been concluded dead, but as soon as they found me amongst them again, they still had the respect and tenderness for me to cry out 'Give him water! give him water!' Nor would one of them at the window attempt to touch it till I had drunk. But from the water I had no relief: my thirst was rather increased by it. So I determined to drink no more; but patiently wait the event; and kept my mouth moist, from time to time, by sucking the perspiration out of my shirt-sleeves, and catching the drops as they fell, like heavy rain, from my head and face. You can hardly imagine how unhappy I was if any of them escaped my mouth."

"I came into the prison without coat or waistcoat. The season was too hot to bear the former, and the latter tempted the avarice of one of the guards, who robbed me of it, when we were under the verandah. Whilst I was at the second window, I was observed by one of my miserable companions, on the right of me, in the expedient of allaying my thirst by sucking my shirt-sleeve. He took

the hint, and robbed me, from time to time, of a considerable part of my precious store : though, after I detected him, I had even the address to begin on that sleeve first, when I thought my reservoirs were sufficiently replenished ; and our mouths and noses often met in the contest. This plunderer—I found afterwards—was a young gentlemen in the Service, Mr. Lushington, one of the few who escaped from death, and since paid me the compliment of assuring me that he believed he owed his life to the many comfortable draughts he had had from my sleeves ! Before I hit upon this happy expedient, I had, in an ungovernable fit of thirst, attempted drinking my urine, but it was so intensely bitter, there was no enduring a second taste ; whereas no Bristol water could be more soft or pleasant than what arose from perspiration.”

“By half-past eleven the much greater part of those living were in an outrageous delirium, and the others quite ungovernable : few retaining any calmness but the ranks next the windows. They all now found that water, instead of relieving, rather heightened their uneasiness ; and ‘Air ! air !’ was the general cry. Every insult that could be devised against the guard : all the opprobrious names and abuse the Soubah, Monickhund, &c., could be loaded with, were repeated, to provoke the soldiers to fire upon

us. Every man that could rushed tumultuously to the window, with eager hopes of meeting the first shot. Then a general prayer to Heaven to put an end to our fearful misery. But these failing, they, whose strength and spirits were quite exhausted, laid themselves down and expired quietly on their fellows. Others, who had yet some little strength and vigour left, made a last desperate effort for the windows. Several succeeded by leaping and scrambling over the backs and heads of those in the first ranks, and got hold of the bars, from which there was no removing them. Many to the right and left sank with the violent pressure, and were soon suffocated. And now a steam arose from the dead and the living, which affected us, in all its circumstances, as if we were forcibly held by our heads over a bowl of strong volatile spirit of hartshorn. Nor could the effluvia of the one be distinguished from the other; and frequently, when I was forced, by the load upon my head and shoulders, to hold my head down, I was obliged, near as I was to the window, instantly to raise it again, to escape suffocation."

"I need not, my dear friend," continues Mr. Holwell, in his truly graphic description of this scene of horror, "ask your commiseration, when I tell you that, in this plight, from

half-past eleven till near two in the morning, I sustained the weight of a heavy man, with his knees on my back, and the pressure of his whole body on my head; a Dutch Sergeant, who had taken his seat on my left shoulder; and a *Topaz*, a black Christian soldier, bearing on my right; all of which nothing could have borne me to support, but the props and pressure equally sustaining me all around. The two latter I frequently dislodged by shifting my hold on the bars, and driving my knuckles into their ribs; but my friend above stuck fast, and, as he held by two bars, was immovable. The repeated trials and efforts I made to dislodge this insufferable incumbrance upon me, at last quite exhausted me; and towards two o'clock, finding I must quit the window or sink where I was, I resolved on the former, having borne, for the sake of others, infinitely more for life than the best of it is worth."

"In the rank close behind me was an officer of one of the ships, whose name was Carey, and who behaved with much bravery during the seige. (His wife, a fine woman, though country-born or *half-caste*, would not quit him, but accompanied him to the prison, and was one of the few who survived.) This poor wretch had been long raving for 'water' and 'air'! I told him I was determined to give

up life, and recommended his gaining my station. On my quitting, he made an attempt to get my place, but was supplanted."

"Poor Carey expressed his thankfulness, but said he would give up life too; but it was with the utmost labour that we forced our way from the window—several in the inner ranks appearing to me to be *dead, standing*. He laid himself down to die: and his death, I believe, was very sudden; for he was a short, full, sanguine man. His strength was great; and I imagine, had he not retired with me, I should never have been able to have forced my way."

"I was, at this time, sensible of no pain and little uneasiness. I found a stupor coming on apace, and laid myself down by that gallant old man, the Rev. Mr. Jervas Bellamy, who lay dead, with his son, the Lieutenant, hand-in-hand, near the southernmost wall of the prison."

"When I had lain there some little time, I still had reflection enough to suffer some uneasiness in the thought that I should be trampled upon when dead, as I had myself done to others. With some difficulty I raised myself, and gained the platform a second time, where I presently lost all sensation. The last trace of sensibility that I have been able to recollect after my laying down, was my sash

being uneasy about my waist, which I untied and threw from me. Of what passed in this interval, to the time of my resurrection from this *hole of horrors*; I can give you no account."

"When the day broke, and the gentlemen found that no entreaties could prevail to get the door opened, it occurred to one of them—I think Mr. Secretary Cooke—to make a search for me, in hopes I might have influence enough to gain a release from this scene of misery. Accordingly, Messrs. Lushington and Walcot undertook the search, and by my shirt discovered me *under the dead* upon the platform. They took me from thence, and imagining I had some signs of life, brought me towards the window I had first possession of."

"But, as life was equally dear to every man, (and the stench arising from the dead bodies was grown so intolerable) no one would give up his station in or near the window. So they were obliged to carry me back again! But soon after, Captain Mills,—now commanding the Company's yacht—who was in possession of a seat in the window, had the humanity to resign it. I was again brought by the same gentlemen, and placed in the window."

"At this juncture, the Subah, who had received an account of the havoc death had made amongst us, sent one of his *Jemmautdars*

to enquire if the chief survived. They showed me to him, told him I had the appearance of life remaining, and believed I might recover if the door was opened very soon. This answer being returned to the Subah, an order came immediately for our release, it being then near six o'clock in the morning."

"As the door opened inwards; and as the dead were piled up against it, and covered all the rest of the floor, it was impossible to open it by any efforts from without. It was therefore necessary that the dead should be removed by the few that were within, who were become so feeble that the task—though it was the condition of life—was not performed without the utmost difficulty; and it was twenty minutes after the order came before the door could be opened."

"About a quarter-past six in the morning, the poor remains of *one hundred and forty-six* souls, being no more than *three-and-twenty*, came out of the *Black Hole* alive; but in a condition which made it very doubtful whether they would see the morning of the next day! Among the living was Mrs. Carey; but poor Leech was among the dead. The bodies were dragged out of the "Hole" by the soldiers, and thrown promiscuously into the ditch of an unfinished ravelin, which was afterwards filled with earth."

This is the end of Mr. Holwell's wonderfully descriptive letter. What suffering,—what misery,—what patience,—does it contain? 'Tis almost a miracle that any survived. He had, however, still much more pain, discomfort, and indignity to undergo. With three other gentlemen, who had also survived, he was ordered into the custody of one of the Subah's officers.

The rest—excepting poor Mrs. Carey, whose youth and great beauty occasioned her to be detained for the conqueror—were immediately set at liberty.

When he came out of the *Black Hole*, Mr. Holwell was in a high, burning fever, and not able to stand. Notwithstanding this truly pitiable condition, he was sent for, to be examined, by the Soubah, and in this miserable condition was carried into his presence. So deplorably weak was he, that it was some time before he could find strength to speak; but as soon as he was able to do so, he related the horrid sufferings and death of his unhappy companions. Without taking the least notice of this distressing tale, the hardened tyrant, Surája-ad-Dowlah, stopped him short by saying he had been informed there was treasure of a considerable value concealed in the Fort; and that, unless he immediately discovered its hiding place, he

must expect no mercy. Mr. Holwell faintly replied : " I know of no such treasure ; " and then ventured to remind the Subah of his assurance the day before, that no hurt should come to himself and his friends. To this remonstrance he paid no more regard than he had done to the complaint, but proceeded in his enquiry concerning the treasure. When, however, he found he could not get any intelligence from Mr. Holwell, he ordered Meer Muddon, the General commanding his Household troops, to take charge of him as his prisoner.

As among the Guard that marched before Mr. Holwell there was a powerful and gigantic native,—in fact, the executioner—who carried a large Maharatta battle-axe on his shoulder : it occasioned a report that he was taken to execution. Such, however, was not the case ; and although still fated to endure much pain and trouble : he lived to see the utter downfall and death of his treacherous and cruel foe.

Unfortunately it had happened that in the hurry, excitement, and confusion of the siege : particularly at that fatal juncture when Governor Drake deserted the Fort, and left it in charge of poor Holwell : it was quite forgotten to set Omichund, the Native Merchant, whom Drake had imprisoned, at liberty. This

neglect, Omichund resented as an act of wilful injustice. 'Tis, indeed, believed, that had it not been for this, Holwell would have been discharged with the rest. This opinion is confirmed by the imprisonment of the three other gentlemen, all of them being persons against whom Omichund had great hatred. He must, therefore, have used his great influence with the Subah, to still hold all of them prisoners.

Mr. Holwell and his associates in captivity were conveyed in a *Hackery* (native springless cart) to the Camp, where they were loaded with heavy fetters, and lodged in the Tent of one of the Subah's Sepoys (native soldiers), which, being of the small dimensions of four feet by three feet, they were obliged to lie, sick as they were, with their bodies half-in and half-out all the night. Although it rained heavily, and they were so long a time exposed to the wet, with scarcely any clothes to cover them: the next day, the high fever they had been suffering from, happily came to a crisis. Though most painful boils broke out on every part of their bodies, causing them to be in a most miserable plight; they, from this time, spite of their being deprived of any sort of civilised comfort and nourishment; gradually regained their strength. In the evening of the next day they were removed to the coast:

and, by order of General Meer Mudden, were soon sent by sea to Moorshedabad,—then the Capital of Bengal—to wait the Subah’s return there; when—as they were informed—the Burrah (great) Náwaub would “determine their fate.” After a long and tedious voyage of thirteen days, in a large open *Budgeron* (Native-boat), in which they had no other provision than rice and water, and no softer bed than some bamboos laid on the bottom timbers of the vessel; continually exposed to excessive heat and violent rains—without any covering but a bit of an old mat and some scraps of sacking;—they arrived at Moorshe-dabad.

By this time,—the boils that covered them had become horrible running sores; while the iron fetters on their legs had actually eaten their flesh away almost to the bone!—On their arrival, Mr. Holwell sent a letter to the Chief Officer of the French “Factory,” with an account of their great distress. With great humanity and kindness, they immediately had sent to them, not only clothes, linen, provisions, and liquors, in great plenty; but also money.

About four o’clock on the 7th of July they landed: and after being obliged to march a considerable distance, as a show and spectacle to the Native rabble that crowded around

them ; they were placed in an open shed, not far from the Náwaub's Palace. Here they received the greatest kindness and every possible relief, not only from the Chiefs of the French and Dutch Factories, but also from the Arabian Merchants.—The Náwaub did not arrive till the 18th July, when the poor prisoners learned that he had enquired for them before he left Calcutta, intending to have set them at liberty ; and that he was offended with Meer Mudden, for having so hastily removed them. As, however, he did not order their immediate discharge when he arrived ; this report must have been one of the “gups” so ordinarily rife in the Native *Bazars*. They were still detained : and only on the 25th were they conducted to the Palace to have an audience, and learn their fate.

But even now they were kept lingering in suspense ; and towards night-fall were sent back without the brutal Surájah Dowlah deigning to see them. This farther insult, as it happened, was a favourable circumstance ; for at night, at a banquet or *Nautch*, to which she was invited in honour of his safe return ; the Náwaub's Grandmother solicited their liberty, when he promised her he would release them the next day. Accordingly, about five o'clock on the morning of the 26th, they were waked, and told that the Náwaub,

or the "Viceroy"—as they called him—would in a few minutes pass by on his way to his Palace of Motee-dhill ("Pearl of my heart"). On hearing this, they immediately rose; and when the Náwaub came in sight, pressed as near his palanquin as they could, making at the same time most respectful "salaams." He must have been in a most exceptionably amiable humour: for, ordering his attendants to stop his palanquin; he looked at them with strong marks of compassion in his countenance; and having heard a short extempore petition spoken by Mr. Holwell—to which, however, he made no reply—he ordered two of his Officers to see their fetters instantly struck off, and conduct them safely wherever they wished to go: giving them, also, strict charge to see that they suffered no injury or insult by the way.

Thus,—at last, Mr. Holwell and his friends got back their liberty.—They lost no time, but immediately took boat, and soon after arrived safe at Corcemádad, one of the many settlements the Dutch then had, and from which place they soon after embarked for England. All those miserable outrages were now to be speedily avenged. On the 29th December following, Admiral Watson arrived in the River Hoogly with the Squadron under his Command; and landed a body of the

Company's Troops. They were under the Command of Colonel Clive, who proceeded immediately to the attack of one of the first Forts on the River front. Early next morning, under cover of a brisk cannonade from the Ships, a further party of Soldiers and Sailors, formed of Royal Troops, and about a hundred Jolly Tars—always eager for a “scrimmage”—under the command of Captain King, were landed to support Clive. The Squadron now advancing, this Fort was immediately evacuated: and the second one being also quickly taken, with hardly any resistance from the panic-stricken Natives, the Ships and Troops pursued their way unmolested to Calcutta, which, after some little fighting, surrendered to the English Commanders.

An expedition was then immediately sent against Hoogly, which they captured also, taking enormous stores of arms, ammunition, and merchandise. Following up these advantages: the English East India Company, not only recovered all they had lately lost; but the Náwaub, the tyrant Surájah al Dowlah, being driven to fly to Moorshedabad: thought it prudent to make a Treaty with the Company, on terms most advantageous to their interests, confirming to them all their former possessions and privileges: and, moreover, granting many new and profitable immunities.

The news of war between England and France, arriving about this time at Calcutta; a neutrality was first proposed, and in some measure agreed to by the Commanding Officers of the two Companies. However, as during the negotiations it was discovered that a private correspondence was being carried on between the French and the Náwaub, all idea of suspending hostilities was laid aside, and a resolution was immediately formed and acted on, to attack all the settlements and factories of the French in India. The British Naval and Military Commanders, Admiral Watson and Colonel Clive, at once vigorously availed themselves of the timidity of the Náwaub—who dared not openly assist the French;—seized the opportunity to invest Chaudernagore, then the most considerable settlement which that Nation had made in Bengal; and which, after a short and brisk cannonade from our Ships, surrendered.

Not satisfied with this, Surájah al Dowlah, restless in his hatred of our power; entered on further treaties with the French, for the purpose of extirpating the English. On being informed of this threatening and formidable understanding between our enemies: the Officers of our Company determined to depose the Náwaub. For this,—they entered into a private treaty with Meer Jaffier, the Vizier or

Chief Minister of the Náwaub, who, in consideration of being invested with the position and authority of his master, agreed to betray him; and also covenanted to pay large sums of money to us by way of indemnity for our past losses and expenses, and granting us a considerable extension of territory, with increase of privileges. This important treaty having been settled; Colonel—now Lord—Clive, with all the available Troops of the Company, advanced within thirty miles of Moorshedabad. In the mean time, Meer Jaffier, having managed to excite discontent and disaffection in the Camp of Surájah al Dowlah, he was deserted by a great portion of his large, but undisciplined, army: and the remainder, making but a faint resistance, a complete Victory was gained by the English, with little loss on their part. Meer Jaffier, in pursuance of the Treaty, was immediately proclaimed Náwaub-Subadar of Bengal.—Thus, in a very short time after their seeming down-fall and destruction; this English Company of traders took upon themselves to dispose of the Soveriegnity of a Country in which they had hitherto been merely on sufferance: whilst they actually exercised the Supreme Authority of the reigning Great Mogul or Emperor of Hindoostan.

CHAPTER XII.

THE EAST INDIAN COMPANY.—CLIVE AND MEER JAFFIER.

LORD CLIVE, who, on this occasion had, with his brave and victorious troops, been the principle means of elevating the new Náwaub; received, as some reward for these valuable services; the title and position of an *Omrah* or Chief, with the more substantial present of a *Jágheer* or territory, the revenues of which amounted to three *Laks* of Rupees—then about the value of thirty-five thousand pounds—a year; and in Cash and Jewels, thirty Laks of Rupees, equal to about *three hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling*!—The cruel tyrant (though now fallen), Surájah al Dowlah, in attempting to escape in disguise, was discovered, and being brought before his traitorous Vizier, Meer Jaffier, now the new Náwaub of Bengal; was immediately hurried off to prison, and there privately executed. Eastern retribution to vanquished foes is always swift and stern.—And so,—this was the miserable end of the great and powerful Surájah al Dowlah, who, only a few

months before—in the seeming plenitude of his power—had cruelly tortured and killed so many of our poor unfortunate countrymen. Our revenge was indeed thorough and complete.

And now, our aspiring East India Company found the making and un-making of Náwaubs too gratifying and lucrative to be abandoned. Our poor tool, Meer Jaffier, was now *suspected*—truly or not, 'tis hardly known; but taking into consideration the wily, treacherous, plotting character of Easterns in general, and the Indian Rajahs in particular; 'tis most probable;—he was suspected of having invited the Dutch to make an attack on Calcutta, with a formidable body of Troops and seven Ships of war, sent from Batavia for the purpose. Though this attempt failed—the English having beaten them with great loss, compelling them to submit to very disgraceful terms of capitulation; and notwithstanding that troops of the Náwaub actually assisted in repelling their attack, and defeating them—yet, the mere *suspicion* of having intrigued with the Dutch, was now held as a good and sufficient reason for the ruin of the newly made Meer Jaffier!—No sooner, therefore, had his friend, Lord Clive, left Bengal for England, on leave, where he was praised, honoured, and féted as the hero of the day—

than those who had succeeded to the Government of the now great and powerful Company's affairs, planned the Náwaub's deposition. This was effected in 1760, Meer Cossim Ali Khan, who had married a daughter of Meer Jaffier, was invested with the Subahship of which his Father-in-law had been stripped. On this occasion, also, the Company again obtained an extension of Territory and increase of Revenue; while many individuals were enriched with voluntary gratification;—and others, with extorted presents. Meer Cossim, the new Náwaub, not satisfied with being established in the diminished position and authority left to him by the all-powerful Company; now took a step towards—what he considered—independence, by meditating the destruction of certain subordinate Chiefs or petty Rajahs, for whose safety and protection, the faith of the Company had been pledged. One of these, Ram Narain, Naib of Patna, perceiving the vengeance of the Náwaub about to fall on him; applied to the Governor and Council at Calcutta, demanding that assistance and protection which they were bound by agreement to give him. With great injustice,—and almost equal imprudence,—they disregarded his appeal; and he fell a victim to the policy of Meer Cossim, who, indeed, easily saw that the distrust and dislike of the

English, which such conduct would naturally excite among the petty Rajahs of Bengal, would strengthen his hands and enable him to effect his purpose of shaking himself free of their hard and overbearing power. The consequences of this breach of faith were,—as had been foreseen by the astute and wily Náwaub—full of difficulty and danger. Most of the Náibs, Rájahs, and other Chiefs of Bengal, were disgusted and alarmed. The reputation of the English suffered greatly:—to such an extent, indeed, that our creature and puppet—as he was deemed—Meer Cossim, seized the opportunity to attempt shaking off the yoke of his oppressive English masters. For this purpose;—he withdrew to a distant part of the Province, where he busily employed himself in raising and disciplining his Troops, and in ingratiating himself with those Chiefs, who no longer placed confidence in the promised protection of the Company.

Having now felt his situation and strength; and believing matters ripe for a rupture with the English; he yet wished to temporise, and, if possible, make them the aggressors. He therefore began to show his contempt of the Company, by granting particular advantages to those who were attached to himself; while he dismissed and excluded all who were well affected to the English interests. As,

however, the haughty Company's servants—the autocratic predecessors of the present Bengal Civil Service—were by no means inclined to permit this partial preference and parade of independence; they determined to depose Meer Cossim, as they had so lately deposed his Father-in-law—and our former friend—Meer Jaffier Khan. After some negotiations, the English Army marched to Patna, where, however, they were severely handled, and, indeed, repulsed by the Troops of the Náwaub. The consequence of this advantage was, that he sacrificed the lives of two rich Native Bankers, who were brothers and subjects of his own, because they were connected with the Company: and also put to death one-hundred-and-fifty English prisoners who fell into the Náwaub's hands. Thus,—again were the English plunged in the midst of a serious struggle. The event was, indeed, somewhat doubtful. All the strength of the Company had to be exerted. Many, even those who were employed in the Civil Departments of the Government; took the field on this momentous occasion, when, not only the power, dignity, and consequence of the Company were at stake; but even the lives and fortunes of all their servants depended on the success of this war.

Every one was, therefore, highly excited,—

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every nerve was strained—and all who were able, volunteered to march at once against the now triumphant and jubilant Army of the Subah. The result proved,—as now and always—that steady discipline—proper preparation—bravery—and “pluck :” must gain the day and win the victory! So it was.—Nothing could stand before the vigorous onslaughts of our Troops, now that they were really roused from their ordinary contempt of the “Niggers”—and to a true sense of their danger. Indeed, one of the greatest faults in India, has been our foolish, contemptuous, undervaluing of our swarthy, but often, brave foes. Now,—Meer Cossim was utterly routed; “horse and foot,” and obliged to seek refuge with Sujah al Dowlah—(not Surájah, he was dead)—the Náwaub of Onde; while our former old friend, Meer Jaffier Khan, who, after his deposition, had been kept at Calcutta as a kind of State prisoner, on a comparatively very small allowance; was reinstated as Subádhár, or Náwaub-Názim of the three Provinces—lately formed—of Bengal, Behar, and Orissá.

Such were then—and even much more lately—the ups and downs of the East Indian potentates.

Meer Jaffier’s restoration was, however, accompanied by such restrictions, as left him

little more than the mere shadow of authority. Large territories were ceded :—new and exclusive privileges were granted :—while such enormous sums of money were stipulated to be paid as indemnity and reimbursement for the expenses of war ; that—conscious of the Náwaub's inability to pay or raise them—provision was made in the agreement or treaty, that if he should be unable to discharge these payments in money ; they were to be made good by assignment of Land.

Meer Jaffier thus became a mere tool in the hands of the Company, and did not long survive his second elevation. He died in February, 1765, having left a legacy of five Laks of Rupees to Lord Clive, and which sum was most nobly and generously settled by that great General as a Fund for the support of disabled Officers and Soldiers in the East India Company's Service ; and a Pension Fund for the Widows of Officers and Soldiers. Meer Jaffier had also declared his son, Nudjum-al-Dowlah, a youth of eighteen, his successor. As, however, his being acknowledged as Subah entirely depended on the will of the Company, they did not admit him to the succession without new Treaties,—further extension of territory,—additional privileges,—and such conditional restraints, not only on his Government, but also on his person, as

rendered him a complete slave to the Company, who now actually took possession of the three Provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissá, which they governed by their own authority. The Náwaub, indeed, retained nothing more than the mere empty name, with an allowance—out of his own Revenues—for the support of his nominal dignity.

He was still further restricted from maintaining Troops without the Company's permission, and even then they were not to be under his command, authority or direction; but under a Native Officer, appointed by the advice of the Governor and Council of the Company, with the title of "Náwaub-Sáib" or Prime Minister, and who was to have the chief management of all the Náwaub's affairs. The hands of this poor Prince being thus so securely tied up, an attack was then again made on his treasury, which was taxed with enormous sums, as presents to different servants of the Company. Nor was the Náwaub the only one to pay for his elevation. The new Prime Minister, Mahomed Reizá Khán, was also obliged to pay tribute to his creators, the now really powerful Company; while even Juggett Seet, a rich banker and son of one of the brothers who had been put to death by Meer Cossim, found it prudent to purchase his safety by contributing to the general

corruption. It has, indeed, been estimated that the whole sum distributed among the members of the Company at the Accession of Nudjum-al-Dowlah amounted to nearly two hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

The Government being now entirely vested in the Company, and the Náwaub being reduced to a mere dependent on the Governor and Council, he was entirely dispossessed of his Revenue, which, with the consent of the Emperor or "Great Mogul," was also vested in the Company; while the Náwaub was induced to accept an allowance of fifty Laks of Rupees, as a compensation for the whole, and which, together with the stipulated payment to the Emperor, was to be paid out of the "*Dewánnée*" or Income of the three Provinces. The remainder was to be retained by the Company, for their permitting the Náwaub to enjoy his clipped and nominal honours.

Eastern Princes are not long-lived. Nudjum-al-Dowlah was no exception to this rule; as both he and his brother and successor, Seyf-al-Dowlah, died between 1765 and 1770, when the youngest brother, Mohuree-al-Dowlah succeeded as Náwaub. These events had little or no importance. They were, indeed, merely used by the now all-important, powerful Company, as so many occasions for the

further reduction of the Náwaub's allowances. All power and authority had faded away, and gone from them; and now they were reduced to the comparatively poor and humble position of salaried pensioners of the great *East India Company*! From that time to now they have been—personally as well as politically—the merest nonentities.

CHAPTER XIII.

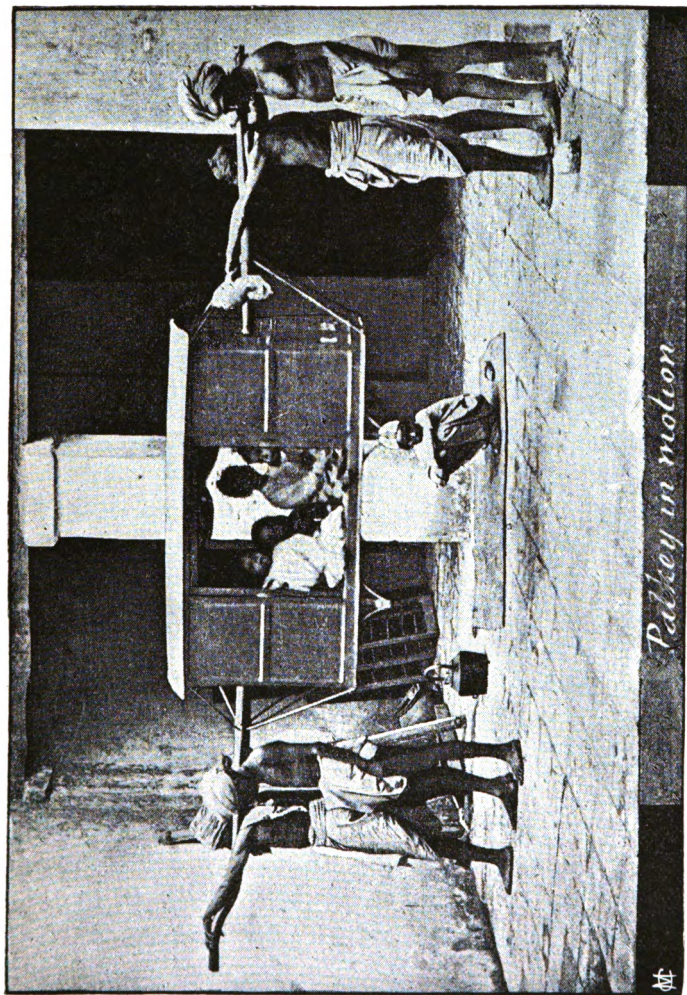
CALCUTTA AND ITS SUBURBS.

As for Calcutta—that once unimportant little village has grown to be, not only the Capital of Bengal,—superseding Moorshedábád, formerly the seat of Government under the former race of Náwaubs—but is also the head-quarters of our Indian Empire, the "*City of Palaces*," and principal residence of the Viceroy and Governor General.

The *Maidán*, a rather extensive field, used for Reviews and Inspections of Troops, is intersected by excellent well-made "kunkah" roads, which may well compare with—if, indeed, they do not excel—any of our home macadamised roads; and is one of the most important thoroughfares. It serves to divide the Official, Mercantile, and Native part with its "*Cheena*" (china), "*Lál*" (red), and "*Burrah*" (great) Bazars, from the fashionable and private quarter. In the latter—facing the Maidán—is the Chowringee Road. It is lined with a regular succession of large and fine-looking—some, indeed, magnificent and palatial—houses, each standing apart in its own grounds or

Kompound, and having grand carriage entrances and porticoes. Here—and in some of the many streets branching off from it, as Park Street, Rawdon Street, Russell Street, Camac Street, Elysium Row, and Theatre Road—are the private residences of the high Government Official Personages; the Principal and under Secretaries of Government; the members of the B. C. S. (Bengal Civil Service), and the great Merchants. The Bishop's Palace is in Chowringhee Road, close to the Cathedral of St. Paul's. Many of the military "Big-wigs," the Commander-in-Chief, Adjutant General, Quartermaster General, and most of the staff, all live in this aristocratic, fashionable and pleasant part of Calcutta: though the Commandant, Fort Major, and other officers on the local Staff of the Presidency, have their official residences in Fort William itself. There is also a very pretty little church—St. Peter's—in the Fort, for the officers and soldiers stationed there.

The Calcutta of to-day, with its fine roads and well-paved footways;—its brilliant gas lights;—Ochterlony Monument;—Noble's glorious statues of Lord Hardinge, and that *preux chevalier*, the bravest of the brave, chivalrous soldier, Sir James Outram;—its Eden Garden and tan-covered Ride, the "Rotten Row" of Calcutta;—with the interesting, though, perhaps, gro-



Palkey in motion

At

tesque, Burmese Temple;—the silvery lake-like water-tanks, well-kept grounds, walks, flowers and shrubs, and the brightly gay Band-stand;—its really regal-looking Government House;—the Town Hall, with its important, imposingly-grand portico, columns, and fine flight of steps;—its fine *Ghâts* (landing places), particularly Prinsep's Ghât, where the Duke of Edinburgh landed on his visit, and where the Prince of Wales disembarked some year or two later;—its grim, service-like looking fort—the Fort William of Indian Politics—with its frowning embrasures, filled with those suggestive, mischief-doing guns, heavy gates, drawbridges, yawning wide and deep moat, and ever steady-pacing Sepoy Sentries;—is truly a place as fraught with historic and interesting associations, as it is glitteringly bright—perhaps some may hint too bright—and gay. There are but few, who have not seen our Indian City of Palaces, can any way realize the idea that their old Indian friends are not "drawing the long bow," when they say that our far-away Eastern Empire has such a really fine and brilliant city for its capital.

The "Strand," as the riverside road, used for the evening Howá Khánna (drive), is called—is broad, well-kept, and—except for its colour, which is red, like a well-burned modern English brick—might hold its own and vie

with the best-made roads in Europe. This *Strand*—though the part used as the general Calcutta promenade, only extends to about the length of Regent Street, say from Oxford Circus to what used to be the “Quadrant”—runs for miles by the side of the River Hoogly. Beyond *Chandpol Ghât*, which is the commencement of the “drive” on the north side, are seen the fine buildings of the Mint, Custom House, and Bank of Bengal: with many warehouses and store rooms of mercantile firms. The *drive* proper rarely extends beyond Prinsep’s Ghât, which faces the southern end or side of the Fort. Towards sundown a regular stream of carriages and equestrians—pedestrians are of the rarest in Calcutta, the few who do walk, seldom, if ever, coming beyond the Maidân or the “Secretary’s Walk,” on the Ellenborough Course—make their way here, where almost everyone knows each other, and, unhappily, finds the knowledge somewhat monotonous and uninteresting. Everyone is warm, languid, tired, pale and faded. Really “washed out,” as far as colour or the want of it goes; that being a term as applied to the *fair* ladies, peculiarly appropriate. A “complexion” in Calcutta is so ordinarily conspicuous by its absence; and is, indeed, such a *rara avis*; that when at rare intervals such a phenomenon is seen, the members of the

sterner sex—who from their more active pursuits get more often brown, yellow, or brick-dust colour, under the influence of the piping, blazing-hot rays of our Eastern Sol—go quite wild and frenzied in their admiration. Alas! the most brilliant complexion and lovely rose-pink coloured cheeks are soon paled, and rendered a sickly yellow hue. There may still be some who remember the sensation caused among the poor, parboiled, whitey-brown denizens of Calcutta, by the charming appearance of the beautiful Miss M—y, daughter of the well-known and popular Captain M—y, when she first “came out,” in 1857. She simply drove all the male creatures wild with admiration, and all the fair ones still paler by contrast; not to say that some were made somewhat envious of her really charming beauty of face, form and figure. After a short time, she married a fine, gallant officer of the dashing “Bengal E. O.’s” and went with her husband to where his Regiment was, at some out-of-the-way “up-country” station. She was then a perfect picture of rosy blushing health, life and vigour. But when we saw her after an absence of only a year, what a change had taken place! Was this pale, languid, and comparatively dowdy-looking creature the same person we had so admired? Yes, this was the result of a short twelve

months residence in Bengal. Although still charming in society for her true amiability and goodness: while her fine expressive features were perfect as ever, the fresh brightness—the rose and peach-like colour—was faded and gone: never to come again.

But to return to our “Jottings” of Calcutta and its notabilities. Leaving the drive, with its well-filled lines of carriages of all kinds; its tiny lady-driving Park Phætons, Curricles, and Dog-carts:—its Tandems, Landaus, Britzkas, Barouches, Broughams, “Sulkees”;—its “Palkee - Gharries,” “Office - Janns,” and “Brownberrys”;—leaving its cavalcades of fair and gallant equestrians;—its Band-stand, with the pretty crowd of young ladies and gentlemen “doing” their flirtations, their coquettings, and their love-makings, all much the same as they are, I believe, done at home in Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens;—leaving the dear little toddling children, with the dark medley of attendant *Ayahs* and *Bairás* carrying their *Sáhib's* treasured babes:—we'll turn homewards again towards Chowringhee. In this direction, on the left, we have the Supreme Court of Judicature, or the “High Court of Bengal” as it is now;—the Treasury (in native parlance, the *Kázanchee*);—the Town Hall;—and then—at the junction of Government Place, with Old Court House

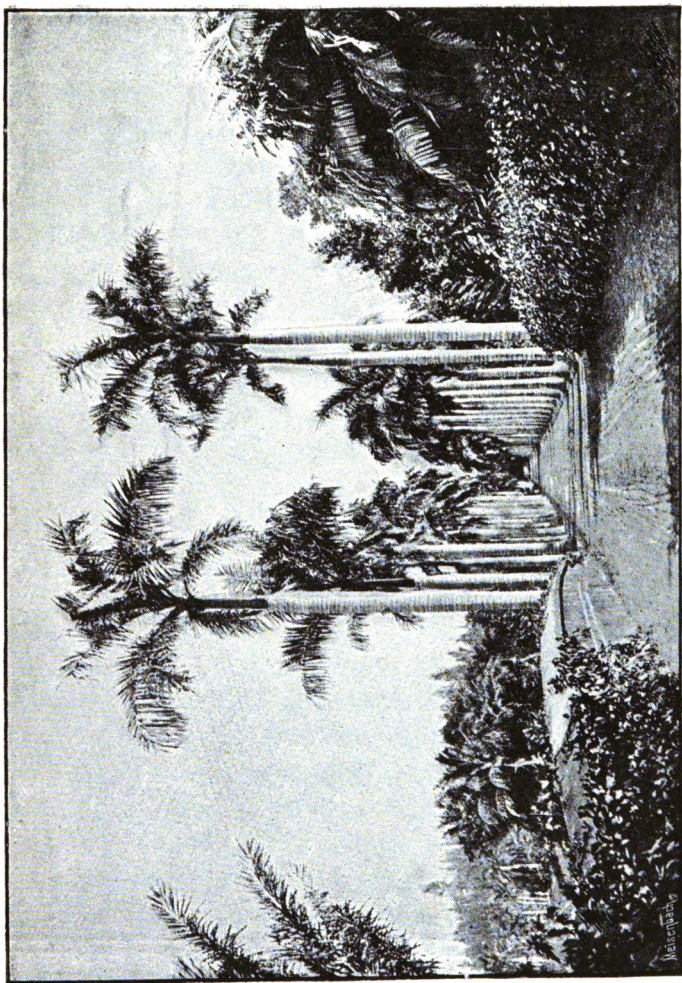
Street—we pass the fine sweep of ground holding the dome-covered Government House. Here again we see the steady-pacing Sepoy sentries marching up and down, outside the gates crowned with the stone effigies of the Royal Lion of England. Midway between the principal residence of the Viceroy, and the "*Diagonal*"—some call it the "cocked-hat"—Road, crossing the *Maidán* to Chowringhee, are placed the grand statues of Hardinge and Outram. Londoners may remember that, previous to sending it out to Calcutta, the latter life-like figure, with its powerful, vigorous, and spirited *élan*, was temporarily put up in Waterloo Place, that fine thoroughfare by Pall Mall, so spoilt by the coarsely hideous and common-place "Crimean Trophy." Well,—in the rather quiet spot—the open space between that *fiasco* and the long thin column with H. R. H. the Duke of York,—of impecunious memory—at the top; and flanked by the palatial and exclusive clubs, the Athenæum and Senior United Service; was placed—for some weeks—the splendid equestrian statue of Outram: the work of one who was as really noble by Art, as he was Noble by name. Unhappily, we had too soon to mourn—by his early death—the loss of one of our best sculptors. Truly, we may well envy the warm denizens of

Calcutta for the possession of two such grand and spirited works of art, as those companion statues by the Diagonal Road, leading across the *Maidân* from Government Place to Chowringhee in Calcutta.

Again, breaking off from these enticing, but possibly aggressive, digressions:—we may cross over to Chowringhee, the abode *par excellence* of Fashion, by the oft mentioned “*Diagonal*” Road—I heard a Frenchman once call it “ze Joganal Rôd”—or, should we require to visit the business part, turning sharply round to the left, we pass through Government Place, Old Court House Street, and Tank Square, on the right side of which was formerly Writer’s Buildings, and originally the sad spot where stood the “*Black Hole!*” I’m here told by a young “Griff” that the Tank Square of my time is now Dalhousie Square.—In this route are all the best of the fashionable Shops. Here,—in Old Court House Street, facing one end of Government House—is the Great Eastern Hotel, formerly “Wilson’s,” and founded by old Davy Wilson, a shrewd Ship’s Steward, who, having made one fortune out of his Hotel—which was a really good one—contrived to make another good *paquet*, by turning it into a “Limited” Company.—’Tis said, that some of the original Shareholders “came to grief;”

but of course *gela va sans dire*. "Old Davy," is, however, all right; and does the "old English Gentleman," enjoying his "*otium*," in one of our Home Counties in good style.—A little further,—on the same side—is the old-established firm of Jewellers (Hamilton's); while nearly opposite is the younger, though, perhaps, the most successful and enterprising emporium of Jewellery, Clock, and Watch making firm, C. and K. These are the two principle *soonee wállás* (goldsmiths). There are others, but not so noted as those two, whose partners generally contrive to pass their time agreeably between London and Calcutta: retiring, on the average, after twelve or fifteen years, with an excellent income derived from their lucrative business. One thing must be said of Calcutta Shop-keepers that is certainly much to their credit;—they rarely, if ever, supply any but the very best goods. Calcutta Tailors, make up the finest cloths;—the Boot makers, the best leathers;—while for cut, style, and workmanship; they may hold their own with the most famous followers of Poole, and Smallpage,—and Humby and Hoby—at Home. The same may be also generally said of the Haberdashers, Mercers, and Hosiers: in our fair, though distant, City of Palaces. In Old Court House Street and Government Place, are also Bathgate's, Thompson & Co.'s,

—excellent firms of Chemists. Then,—we have the fashionable general Mercery and oddment Shops, or as they are, or were, rather comically called “Investments:” where the dear ladies of Calcutta can kill their bitter enemy, old Time; and see every possible thing in dresses, made and unmade: “the very sweetest thing in the world, my dear!” Millinery, Parisian toys, and fancy articles of every kind, to tempt the dear creatures to spend the “*Tacká's*” (slang word for Rupees). As Ladies never, and Gentlemen very seldom, carry any money about them—the heavy and cumbrous silver currency, rendering it almost impossible, and certainly very inconvenient;—the customers everywhere merely sign “voucher” forms for the articles they purchase, and which, at the end of each month—accounts are pretty regularly sent in “per mensem” all over India—are forwarded by “Chuprassee” or Collector for payment. This system is a great inducement for many of the dear, idle, and rather thoughtless ladies, to swell their accounts with the too-confiding Shop or “Investment” Keepers, who are only too happy to secure the valued “voucher” autographs of their fair customers; who—however newly arrived—are soon well known in a place, where, a few days after the landing of a new batch of passengers; every-



AVENUE OF PALMS, BOTANICAL GARDENS, CALCUTTA.

one is *au courant* with the most private affairs,—income,—and resources of even the latest comer. You soon get "spotted" in such a place, the traders having their eyes well open. So,—the "shady" ones soon find their level. Of course, "bad debts" are made in Calcutta, as in other places. The high prices charged in ordinary, however, must allow a good margin to cover the shortcomings and defaultings of the few who manage to get on the "blind-side" of our worthy and clever Calcutta traders. Much could be said of the Rides, Drives, and "Walks" of the suburbs of Calcutta. We might, indeed, enlarge on the attractions of Kidderpore—with its fair, though dark-brown (some few even black) "chee-chee" (half-caste, or Eurasian) ladies: the pretty and amiable wards of the Upper Military Orphan Society;—Alipore,—the residence of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal;—Cossipore,—with its Jute-presses and Sugar-factories;—Dum-dum,—the Woolwich of Bengal, with its Artillery dépôt;—Chinsurah,—formerly the head-quarters of the Danish possessions in the East Indies;—and on the other side of the Hoogly; the splendid Botanic Gardens, with its far-famed, wonderfully large Banyan, or "Banana," Tree, underneath whose wide-spreading branches a Battalion of Soldiers

might find shelter from the sun. Then, on the same side of the River, there's St. Paul's Missionary College;—the principle Station of the East Indian Railway; and, some fifteen miles further on, the suburban country-house of the Viceroy at Barrackpore. Time and limited space, however, forbids more now. We may, perhaps,—in our “Jottings”—come back to the gay, hot, and expensive city. At present, we'll merely say, in the Hindoostanee vernacular; that we shall “subburkerô” (stop)! though probably many may think the proper word should be “buss” (enough)!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE “BUKKUS” OR “BOX-WALLÁ.”

“WALLÁ,” is a term applied in Hindoostan rather freely—if not, indiscriminately—to all classes of native Artisans, Mechanics, and Traders. Although “*Qui-Hye*” has little pretension to be considered an authority on Indian philological questions; he believes that the true and literal meaning of the word “*Wallá*,” is bearer, or carrier. However,—everyone in India, especially the working classes, are all—both Hindoo and Moham-medan—more or less, “*Wallás*.” Thus,—a man is call a “*Bukkus-wallá*” because he carries a “*Bukkus*” or box—though, by-the-by, your Calcutta, or even Up-country, “*Bukkus-wallá*,” is much too rich and important a person to carry his *Bukkus*, or anything; and therefore hires a Cooly (native porter) to take it about for him.

The ingenious worker of the beautiful and delicate embroidery, so much and deservedly admired, called “*Chikun*” or “*Cheekun*,”—is a “*Cheekun-wallá*,” while the owner or

driver of the horrible conveyances, the "Keeria-Ghárries," let out for hire, are as often called "Ghárree-wallás" as "Garree-wán;" and, the coal-black, nearly naked "Bheestie" or water-carrier, is a "Pánee-wallá." Then, the Palankin or "Pálkee"-bearer, is a "Pálkee-wallá;" the Baker is a "Rootee-wallá" or bread-carrier; though, perhaps, he may never do anything but superintend, or assist in the bakery. The Butterman is a "Muckan-wallá," though he may only make the butter; while the Milkman or Milkwoman is a "Dhood-wallá" or "Dhood-wallee," as the case may be—"wallee" being the feminine of "wallá." Then there's the "Metye-wallá," the itinerant seller of those delicious mouth-melting Eastern delicate sweeties:—the "Jelaivie," the "Moondher" (made of purest milk and sugar), and the "Motee-ke-luddoo" (pearl-balls); the "Ghee-wallá," vender of "Ghee," that compound of melted butter, so much used in all eastern cuisines by the "Bobertchie" (cook). Curiously enough, a drunkard is denounced as a "Mut-wallá" (drink-carrier); and a teller of untruths—and in India, where are they not?—is emphatically called a "Jhoot-wallá" or carrier of lies; while the native Boot or Shoemaker is a "Jootee-wallá;" Butchers are "Ghoste-wallás;" Fruiterers and Greengrocers

are "Phull-wallás;" and Florists, "Phule-wallás."

As for the *Bukkus* or *Box-wallá*; he may be a mere peddling hawker of "ee-smaul theengs, Mem Sahib," ("small things,") as he rather modestly describes the heterogeneous contents of his *Bukkus*, in which is generally stored something of every thing and kind, reminding one of that wonderful shop-keeper, whose stock comprised "everything, from a needle to an anchor." Indeed, this class of *Bukkus-wallá* has all sorts of "oddments," as pins, needles, tapes, violet-powder, "Bristow's" Bears-grease, Rogers' Cutlery, Crosse and Blackwell's Pickles, &c., &c. Or, he may be the tall and really handsome Cheyt Singh, the rich Sikh Silk Merchant from the Cheená Bazàr, who has a large and valuable stock of Silks, Muslins, Baréges, and Lace that could well vie in quality, value—and most certainly in price, which is generally high—with the most *recherché* of the highest class of shops in London or Paris. This fine portly Sikh, Cheyt Singh, would, in the ordinary vernacular, be also called a "*Coprá-wallá*" or cloth-carrier, though *he* never really carries anything, but has his valuable goods borne about for him by five or six stout and stalwart perspiring Coolies. His attractive stock, is not all contained in boxes; but, according to

the nature, delicacy, texture, and value of the articles, are placed in bales and parcels; while the ribbons, lace, and delicate dress-pieces are in the "Bukkus." Some of the principle Calcutta *Bukkus*, or *Copra-wallás*, are, indeed, very rich. They have their regular round of customers on whom they call, while they seek to extend their clientèle by visiting, with their tempting goods, all new comers, and, indeed, most of the better class of *Sáhib's* houses, as often as possible. Although there are in Calcutta many English and French silk-mercens, drapers, and hosiers; having fine shops elegantly, if not luxuriously, fitted up, in Government Place, Tank Square, and other places as I have before mentioned; and who, indeed, have little to complain of want of patronage; still, the great heat of the climate, with its consequent langour and indolence—indeed, something of the *dolce far niente* of the Italians, who so well understand that sweetness of doing "nothing"—in a country so many degrees warmer, nay hotter, than Italy, and so truly enervating in all its influences as India is; of course, keeps many of the fair ladies at home, where, very often, they are only too glad to hear that Cheyt Singh, the "Coprá-wallá—or Peer Mohammed, the Bukkus-wallá—is "hye" (here), "Mem Sáhib."

And so the Hon. Mrs. Montpelier, Mrs. Tracy, or even the great Lady Semplar, is pleased to have the opportunity of enjoying the excellent and enticing amusement, so dear to the ladies, as overhauling the bukkus, bales, and parcels, is sure to prove. It is, perhaps, just after *Tiffin* that *mauvais quartre-d'heure*, when the heat of the day is at its height,—when the *Punkah-wallá* is most languid, "*tug-geeá*" (tired), or "*soostee*" (lazy); and when every now and then he nods and dozes, perhaps sleeps, snores, and dreams; or if awake, he chews his *betel*, or furtively smokes his primitive "Hubble-bubble" (common hookah); at all events, he entirely ignores the duty of properly pulling the *Punkah* with anything like vigour or regularity. In the evening, or early morning though, he's well kept up to the mark by the *Burrah Sáhib's* stentorian *hookum* (order), who shouts "*Toom págee soor, khoob jhore, lumbá hát se táno!*" ("Thou lazy pig, pull strongly, with a long arm!") But Lall Mohammed don't think of the *Sáhib* now—he's away—and he thinks the "*Mem-Sáhib*," or "*Ladie-Mem-Sáhib*," too kind and good-natured to complain of his laziness to the *Málik* on his return from office. Therefore, in spite of the *Bairá's* threats and revilings of his being a "*Kooch kôm-ke-naye*" (good for nothing), or the

greater reproach of being a "*Nimuk-kráb*" (bad salt), he pulls easily, and most leisurely.

Well, our pretty, good Lady Semplar—née Bessie Trant, you know—is at home; and having finished Tiffin; is now *en déshabille*, and, for the time, nearly hors-de-combât with the drowsy heavy heat,—the monotonous quiet, and maddening *ennui*. She is too restless to sleep—too listless to read; while, as for playing or singing—though she is an accomplished musician—just now that is quite out of the question. She will kill, or get through the time somehow, until the day is so far advanced that she can call Motee, her Ayah, to dress for the *Howá-khánná* drive. And so,—she says to the Bairá "*Bhote atchá, Peeroo, ooská coprá wallá, ahnádo.*" ("Very well, Peeroo, show the clothman in.") And Keiser Sing—Cheyt Singh—or Peer Khán, as the case may be, accordingly, most respectfully enters, making the usual grave salutation by raising his hands to his forehead, and saying: "*Salám, Mem-Sáhib, aup b' atchá hye?*" ("Salaam Lady, is the Mem well?") He then calls in his Coolies, who, bringing in their loads of bales and parcels, goes in to the verandah for some "*buk-buk*" (chit-chat), or "*gup*" (news), with Lall Mohammed, the Punká-wallá. And now, Keiser Singh shows his bright ribbons, crêpes, and lace; his deli-

cate *Barége* and *Mousseline-de-laine* ; and his grand *moire-antique* silk and satin dresses, to the languid, tired, and half-sleepy lady ; who, however, somehow brightens up a little in looking over the Merchant's really pretty and attractive stock. Now,—though her capricious, gay, and extravagant Ladyship's *Almorahs* (wardrobes), chests of drawers, and trunks, are all crammed full of all sorts, kinds, and descriptions of attire : though Mad^{me} Boudet, of Government Place—Mad^{me} Gervain, of Chowringhee—or Bodelio et Cie, of Tank Square ; have just sent home " lovely " specimens of their " *confections* " in Dress-making and Millinery ; though Baker and Catcliffe—Francis Ramsey & Co.—and the " Exchange " have been all most impartially visited and purchased from ; while there is no possibility of her requiring any of the Coprá-wallá frippery ; the dear, petulant, indolent, half-spoilt grande-dame " Ladye-Sáhib," must amuse herself, surely ; and besides, can't send away the " Gureeb ademye " (poor man) without buying something—" can she ? " Thus it is,—that these *Bukkus* and *Coprá-wallás*, generally find good and liberal customers, if the *Mem* or Ladye-Sáhib is at home. And when, some months after—for our Calcutta mercer, draper, or hosier,—whether native Coprá-wallá, or English or French Shop-

keeper, one and all, never dream of asking for cash—they send in their “eesab” (bill), to the Burrah-Sahib, who—though possibly he may make a wry face at the total, which is anything but reasonable,—never thinks of disputing any of the items of the account, after glancing at the Lady-Sáhib’s scribbled autograph signature on the “vouchers.” He therefore pays the *poor man’s* “little bill,” which, most probably, is two-hundred or three-hundred per cent. profit! I’m told that there’s some important alteration in these matters now; and “*maintenant nous avons changé toute gela*,”—perhaps; but I can’t help believing that Messieurs the English and French Shopkeepers, and Cheyt Singh, and Peer Khán, still find that there’s some “balm in Gilead” left in the way of profit—“*purwustee*” and “*dustoorie*,” (Hindoostanee expressions for “favour” and “custom.”)

The *Bukkus-wallá*, with “*ee smaul theengs*,” is altogether a different sort of fellow, to the rich and grand *Coprá-wallá*. But though he is much more humble in appearance and manner, and his stock-in-trade is not anything so extensive or costly, he may yet be very well off, and able to indulge in many things the natives regard as luxuries. The fact is, that all this class of people—Hindoos and Mahommedans, Bengalees or Sikh “up-country” men—are

economical to a degree quite impossible to an European of any grade,—and soon, by dint of hard-work, saving, and scraping; and also by lending out small sums of money at most exorbitant usury to their poorer and less fortunate—or more indolent—brethren, manage to accumulate capital; when they launch out and expand into House and Land-owners. At present though, we have only to deal with the poor grub, the Bukkus-wallá, and not the fat, rich, and consequential, portly *Báboo*, he afterwards inevitably becomes.

'Tis now, therefore, only Rám-deen, the veritable Bukkus-wallá, with "ee smaúl theengs," who now "stops the way." He says: "Mem-Sáhib want some good Breesto's Bear-grease, Piver's 'Kiss-me-quick' perfume, or Rodger's sissà" (scissor)? It should be here remarked that a rather peculiar feature in East Indian life, is its strict conservative reluctance to admit of any change in its customs and habits. For instance:—there are certain firms, who, having attained a great Indian reputation for their goods, always command the highest prices for them: while for the products of others, equal in character and quality, there is only a very limited demand. Thus, to mention a few:—Piver's and Pinaud's perfumes, —Exshaw's Cognac, —Crosse and Blackwell's Pickles, —Roger's Cutlery, —with Broadwood's

and Collard's Pianos, and McCabe's Watches; are everything—and the rest, nowhere.

And so, Rám-deen takes good care only to have articles with the “brand” and “trade-mark” of these, (as he calls them,) “A1” Firms. As before mentioned, he has something of everything; his Bukkus really containing a most varied and inclusive stock. Besides needles, thread, tapes, pins and buttons; he has jams, marmalade, chutnee, curry-powder, and pickles; hair brushes, combs, powder and cosmetics; children's socks, and ladies' slippers, &c., &c. Should it happen that you want anything he has not with him, he will promise to bring it “Kul-roje” (to-morrow), and most surely keeps his word. These native pedlars—for such is the real Bukkus-wallá—are enterprising, industrious, civil and pleasant in manner; and,—if you know how to deal with them—that is, not to take *all* they say *au pied de la lettre*—they are not very extortionate in their prices. Of course, if Rám-deen comes across a “flat,” or “griff” as the Indian Johnny Newcome is called—and our black hawker of “ee smaul theengs” is too cute and sharp not to detect the soft genus with “half an eye”—he victimizes him well and thoroughly. Indeed, for that matter, Cheyt Singh, Peer Mohammed or any of the best and richest of

them, will generally ask much more than they intend to take. The only way to deal with any of these native dealers, is to offer rather *less* than half their demand and then slowly advance to about two-thirds at most. Thus, if a dress-piece is priced ten rupees, offer four rupees, eight annas—or five rupees; and if you really want the article,—and the Bukkus-wallá sees you do—you may have to advance your bid to “sant rupeeá, ant ánná” (seven rupees and half—or “aut rupeeá” (eight rupees. Apropos of the expression “*ee smaul*,” which may have puzzled some readers, it should be mentioned, that the native Hindoo or Mussalman cannot well pronounce the sibillant European consonant “s”; and therefore when endeavouring to say an English word or name commencing with it, rather comically prefixes the vowel “e,” pronounced “ee,” as “ee-small”—ee-street”—ee-square”—&c.

CHAPTER XV.

THE "SUTTEE";—HINDOO WIFE BURNING.

SUTTEE,—the horrid custom of Wife or Widow-burning, formerly,—indeed, even to a late period—so prevalent among the Hindoos, is now extinct, not only in all parts of British India, but also in those places having an independent Native Government, and removed from our influence and power of interference.

The cessation of this terrible "religious" ceremony has, however, only been effected by the most active and strenuous exertions of our Government and its officials. Of course, in all places under our direct sway, this custom of burning the *living* Widows, with the bodies of their deceased husbands, has long ceased. But not so in other parts. Until very lately, in spite of our Authorities exerting every possible interest and influence, this dreadful human sacrifice existed, more or less, in all Hindoo Native States. Happily, it may now be truly said to be quite a thing of the past.

It must, however, be clearly understood that, even under the worst of circumstances,

and amongst the most bigoted and fanatical of the extreme Brahminical Hindoos, there was no compulsion or force of any kind used to make the poor Hindoo widows immolate themselves by so fearful a death. The incentive was merely a matter of opinion, custom, or *fashion*, as it might—by a hideous travestic of terms—possibly be called. And, really, when we remember the large number of deaths from burning, not only Widows, but fair English Maids and Wives, through wearing crinoline ; and the numerous serious ailments arising from the Fashion—truly hideous in every way—of Chignons, we can hardly afford to sneer or wonder at the poor, ignorant, weak, and superstitious Hindoo woman, who had been taught to believe that sacrificing herself on the death of her Husband, was not only a good and proper custom or "fashion" ; but that it was also a holy and religious duty expected from—if not imposed on—her for her spiritual good. The Brahmins taught her that passing through the fiery ordeal of the Suttee would entitle her to everlasting happiness with the Peris and Houris of the Hindoo Paradise. On the other hand :—every possible argument was brought to bear on the poor, weak, excited creature, who, if ever strong-minded enough to refuse the *Holy Death*, was considered degraded and lost to all sense of

honour, religious duty, or decorum. She was in fact often banished; and always seriously reduced in social position and consideration. Thus, the inducement to fulfil the wishes—almost amounting to commands—of the Priestly Brahmins, was indeed all powerful. These Brahmins, indeed, told her that the voluntary surrender of life on the death of her Husband would certainly ensure her a participation of those heavenly joys, to which *he* was unquestionably admitted. This religious belief, though conceived in the grossest error, and founded on most fallacious and absurd arguments, was then too firmly bound up in the minds of those poor deluded enthusiasts, and too much encouraged by the Teachers of all they learnt in their earliest youth, to be dispossessed by the mere dread of suffering,—or overcome by the soundest reasoning or powers of persuasion.

There has been much difference of opinion as to the origin of this fatal ceremony. Some say that it arose in the endeavour to prevent a horrid practice,—then prevailing to an alarming degree among the Gentoo or Hindoo women,—of poisoning their husbands on every slight occasion of jealousy; or on their suspecting him as sated with the charms of his present wife, and searching for another. Others, contend that the horrible sacrifice

could hardly have been instituted as a punishment for the murder of the Husbands by their Gentoo Wives, because they offered themselves voluntarily; and that, indeed, none but such could be admitted to the “privilege” of sharing the “glory” which attended the performance of Suttee. Assuming the truth of the traditionary account of these poisonings, we can easily understand that many women would feel stimulated to avoid the shadow of suspicion, by not only offering, but eagerly complying with an institution that would be an unequivocal proof of their innocence and purity. Thus, a custom or law, which was perhaps compulsory at first, after a time became—by the force of opinion and custom—perfectly voluntary; and the submission, which originally might have been enforced, would be afterwards made from choice! As for the poor creatures who preferred their lives to “glory,”—they were degraded, and made the subject of keen reproach and serious loss of position, if even they were not altogether put aside and banished from family and home. It must be remembered that the Hindoo laws permit of a plurality of wives—though this is an indulgence not so universal as is popularly believed—and on the death of the *Màlik* (master), the “*pylá-Beebee*” (first or principal wife) had the original “claim” to the distin-

guished *honour and privilege* of performing the act of *Suttee*. If, however, after twenty-four hours' consideration, she decided to forego its advantages, the next in marital succession became entitled to the choice ; and, in case of *her* refusal, all the others in regular order had the privilege offered to them. It was, however, a very rare occurrence for the "pylá-Beebe" to surrender what was considered her honourable right.

The inevitable consequence which followed a disinclination to this sanctified self-murder was that the uncomplying widow lay under the imputation of being deficient in honour, purity, and a regard for the welfare of her family. For the Brahmins invariably taught them, from the earliest moment they were capable of listening to argument, that this sacrifice was equally necessary to their own glory and the *dignity* of their children. It is, indeed, a well-known fact, that the daughters of a Matron, who thus made a voluntary end of her existence, were not only preferred in marriage by the most distinguished persons of their own tribe, "*Jât,*" or *Caste* ; but they also frequently found husbands from amongst those whose superior Caste, or *Jât* and position, —under the strict rules and laws of their most exclusive Religion — would have ordinarily rendered it impossible. It was, indeed, under-

stood that only through the fame of their Mother's “heroic virtue” could they hope to gain admission to so superior a position. So, —though no legal punishments were, or could be, awarded to those whose courage proved unequal to the fearful ordeal,—yet, as they were really marked out for contempt,—their children deprived of many advantages, and had the stamp of impurity fixed on them, they incurred materially all the penalties and disadvantages ordinarily attending infamy and disgrace. But from whatever cause or influence these unfortunate women acted, it is undoubtedly true that the supposed duty was performed with a degree of fortitude, equally wonderful and pitiable,—truly worthy of a far better cause. And what is still more extraordinary, this miserable, awful sacrifice was performed, not only by those who having lived with their husbands till love had grown and ripened so that they might be, perhaps, almost excused for preferring even a painful death to separation; but, indeed, also by young and blooming beauties, in whom a spirit—which leaves in distant inferiority the most celebrated Heroines of Ancient or Classic History—not only prevailed over the natural dread of so fearful a death; but which often supported them in a determined resistance against the prayers, exhortations, and persua-

sions of the compassionate and horrified English Ladies, who always tried everything possible to prevent the awful ceremony being carried out. Unhappily, neither they nor their husbands had then any power or authority to forbid or stop it. Many such women, of iron nerve and indomitable courage, passed through the dread scene of preparation, and the fiery ordeal itself, with such firm and unshaken constancy,—such undaunted resolution,—and, what is still more extraordinary, with such apparent satisfaction—as to really leave some doubts in the minds of the European spectators, whether it might not be cruel to interrupt—had they the power to do so—the melancholy and miserable catastrophe.

Rare instances, however, did occur; when the unhappy victim was deserted by her unnatural calmness and fortitude. It sometimes did happen, that just at the dreadful moment of impending fate, she then discovered, when unhappily it was *too late*, that she had been buoyed up by a false and spurious resolution, founded rather on poor vanity, than firm principle! To describe the horrors of such a scene under these circumstances, is as difficult—if not impossible—as it was utterly beyond the efforts of the pitying, though helpless, European spectators, to interpose or do anything to rescue the repentant shrieking creature, from



PANT. BRAHMIN—MOONSHIE OR WRITER, IN COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

the last fearful act of the dire and dreadful Tragedy. For, at this stage of the ceremony—no sooner was the least appearance of reluctance perceived by the attendant Brahmin Priests, and those other bigoted and fanatical religious enthusiasts—the Fakeers and Gogys—with those also whose imaginations were heated into a belief that the sacrifice was actually *acceptable* to their god or goddess, the *Kálee* or *Khrishná*, who ruled their Pagan Worship ;—they instantly *all* united in forcing the wretched widow to ascend the pile or scaffold prepared to put an end to her existence ; and where she was even sometimes held down, by long bamboo poles and other instruments, until the flames reached her. Then, the sounds of the loudest possible *music* of “tom-toms,” with shouts, yells, and hideous noises of all kinds, were used to drown the wretched victims cries.

The following is from a minute account of a “*Suttee*” taken from personal observation ; which graphically describes one of these affecting acts of mistaken zeal, which took place at Cassimbazar—then called “Cossimbazar”—a Factory belonging to the then comparatively uninfluential “East India Company.”

“In the morning of February 4th, 1742, Ram-Chund, a Pundit of the powerful Máhá-

rátta tribe, aged twenty-eight, rather suddenly died. His Widow—he had but this one Wife, about seventeen years old—as soon as he expired, disdaining to wait the time (twenty-four hours) allowed for reflection, immediately declared to the Brahmins and witnesses present, her firm resolution to perform the act of *Suttee*! As the family was held in great consideration in the ‘Factory,’ and occupied a good social position; all the Merchants of Cossimbazar, and her relations and friends, used every possible argument to dissuade her from the horrid act. The Lady of the English Chief Factor or Governor, with the tenderest humanity, essayed her utmost powers of persuasion; but, unfortunately, to no purpose. The infant unprotected state of her children (two girls and a boy, the eldest not four years of age), the terrors and pain of the death she sought—were all painted to her in the most vivid colours. But—she was deaf to all. She certainly gratefully thanked the Lady; but said, ‘she had now nothing worth living for.’ She, however, begged protection for her children. When the torments of burning were urged *in terrorem* to her; she, with a calm and resolute countenance, put one of her fingers in the fire, and held it there a considerable time! She then with one hand put fire in the palm of the

other,—sprinkled incense on it,—and then deliberately fumigated the Brahmins! In fact, she was so evidently wound up to such a pitch of fanatical religious exaltation, as to be quite beyond the reach of any sensible or ordinary argument. The consideration of her children, deprived of the protection of a parent, was again urged. She replied: '*He* that made them, would take care of them!' As a last resource, she was told by the English Authorities—though falsely, as they then really had not the least power to interfere—that she would not be permitted to thus throw her life away. This, for a short time, gave her deep affliction; but, soon recollecting herself, she told them that death was always in her power; and that if she was prevented burning herself according to the laws and traditions of her *jât*, she would starve herself to death! So, finding her thus steadfast and resolved, her friends were compelled to forego further opposition.

"The body of the deceased Pundit was carried down to the water-side early on the following morning. The Widow, accompanied by three of the principal Brahmins, her children, parents, other relations, friends, and a numerous concourse of the Native Villagers, followed about ten o'clock. It was then necessary to get an order from Hussein Khan,

the Chief Native Authority and *Fouzdar* at Moorshedábad. This order or permit did not arrive until past one o'clock, when it was brought by one of the Soubah's own Officers, who, however, had special and particular orders to see that the act of *Suttee* was an entirely *voluntary* one on the part of the Widow.

“While they were waiting for the *Fouzdar*'s order, the Widow employed her time in praying with the Brahmins, and bathing in the ‘holy’ Ganges. As soon as it arrived, she retired, and stayed for about half-an-hour with her mother and female relatives. She then divested herself of her *Bangles*, bracelets, ear-rings, and *nose-ring*, and tied them in a cloth, which hung, like a apron, in front of her. After this, her female relations conducted her to one corner of the *Pile*, on which was a sort of arched arbour, formed of dry sticks, boughs, and leaves, open only at one end to admit of her entrance. In this arbour the body was placed, the head being opposite to the opening. At the corner to which she had been brought, the Brahmins had made a small fire; by the side of which she and the three Priestly Brahmins sat for some minutes. Then one of them gave her a leaf of the *Bale* tree—the wood of which is that ordinarily consecrated to form part of the Funeral *Pile*—and which she then threw into the fire.

" One of the others gave her a second leaf, which she held over the flames, while he three times dropped some *ghee* on it, which melting, fell also into the fire. These two operations were symbolical preparations of *her* approaching dissolution. Whilst they were performing these ceremonies, the third Brahmin read to her portions of the *Aughtorrah-Bhad* (the Hindoo religious Code of Laws), and asked her some questions, to which she replied with a calm steady voice, and serene expression of countenance. But now—the noise of *Tom-tom* beating, and the incessant, excited shouts of the people, was become so very great, rampant, and overpowering, as to render it quite impossible for any one—even those nearest to her—to understand a word of what was said. These few and quite inaudible words over, she was led, with great solemnity, three times round the Pile, the Brahmins constantly reading by her side. On coming to the small fire for the third time, she took off the rings from her fingers and toes, and put them—still calmly—with her other jewellery and ornaments. She now took a solemn and dignified leave of her children, parents, and relations, and then quietly stood ready for the last stage of this fearful ceremony.

" One of the Brahmins then advanced, and

dipping a large wick of cotton in some *Ghee*, gave it to her, ready lighted, in her hand, and led her to the open side of the harbour, where all the Priestly Brahmins fell prone at her feet, and remained until she blessed them—when they retired. By two steps she then ascended to the fatal Pile, and entered the harbour. Immediately on entering, she made a profound reverence at the feet of the body of her dead husband, and seated herself by his head. After looking in silent meditation on his face for about a minute, she deliberately applied the lighted wick in her hand to the dry leaves, twigs, and sticks of the harbour, and fired it in three different places. She, however,—wonderful to say—immediately noticed, that having set fire to the leeward, the flames only burnt languidly, and *away* from her; and instantly perceiving her error, she arose, and again deliberately set fire to the windward, and then resumed her former station at the head of the body. At this instant, an English Officer, with his cane, separated the boughs and leaves on the windward side, thereby giving the spectators a more distinct view of her as she sat; so that they saw plainly with what a surprising degree of calm dignity she set fire to the Pile for the last time, and still, as before, quietly—actually quietly and composedly—resuming her seat afterwards. The

very inflammable and combustible materials of the Pile were now quickly consumed—the supports of the roof fell in—enveloping her in smoke and flames !”

It is, indeed, a most extraordinary fact, that not only was this horrible sacrifice performed by these poor fanatical, misguided creatures, in the first exciting paroxysm of their grief, or from the impulse of an overwrought hysterical and spurious vanity; but many instances have occurred in which Hindoo women, whose Husbands have died in Foreign Countries, and under Governments which would not permit of the perpetration of this hideous act of self-immolation; have left their homes and families, and retired into those parts of Hindoostan where the practice was tolerated, and there submitted to this terrible death. This, therefore, they must evidently have done in the full and firm conviction that they were performing an act of true religious duty.

Beyond this—it has been known that some of these women have carried their determination of offering themselves upon the shrine of their departed Husbands still further. Having survived till their children had attained an age when they could provide for themselves—they then, after a lapse of years, coolly and solemnly demanded permission to

devote themselves to death ; making a declaration, that having performed all their maternal duties, their conjugal ones claimed from them this long delayed sacrifice !

For all that, however, it must not be understood that "*Suttee*" was altogether a regular custom ; or that it was continually, or even frequently, performed. For among the lower ranks or inferior *caste* it was never practised. Thus, it seems, that even here the injunction of "*Noblesse oblige*" was felt. Though, indeed, it must be confessed, that it was even seldom that those in the most exalted stations were induced by love, vanity, or superstition, to claim the fatal and terrible privilege :—while happily now it has ceased altogether.

CHAPTER XVI.

NATIVE DANCING-GIRLS, “ NAUTCH-KE-WÁLLEES.”

THE female Dancers, known in Hindoostan as Nautch-Wállees, or Nautch-ke-Wállee ; are of two sorts. The first are said to be consecrated to the performance of certain religious rites and ceremonies in the Hindoo Temples, or other places appropriated to the worship of the Hindoo ; or—as is more probably believed to be the case—are retained for the gratification and amusement of the Brahmins who minister in those sacred places. These—with their attendant, but subordinate, musicians are formed into little parties, societies, or troops, each of which is led or governed by some middle-aged woman, who has herself been formerly a Nautch-ke-Wállee.

The second class of these Dancers are mere itinerant mercenaries, who, roving about from place to place, engage themselves as performers at any Nautch — festival — or Tamáshá—entertainment. These also place themselves under the care and management of some elderly experienced woman, as well

for the purpose of professional instruction, as for the equally—if not more—important matters of regulating their conduct,—and advising and arranging as to the terms of their pecuniary remuneration. It is, indeed, no uncommon occurrence for Native Princes, Rájahs, and other great, noble, and wealthy Chiefs, whose Hareems are filled with *Khoob-soorut*—beautiful — “Beebee-logue” — “Ladies,” to become greatly enamoured and infatuated with one of these wandering Nautch-Wállees, whose fascinations urge them to lavish on her a fund of wealth. This disposition,—under the shrewd suggestions of the ancient “adviser”—she seldom fails to take the greatest advantage of. Each troop or party of Nautch-Wállee have also one, two, or more male “Musicians;” who, during the Náitch or Nautch, make most hideous, ear-splitting, never-ceasing monotonous sounds—called music.—This, they do, squatting on their heels on the ground, beating their *Tom-toms*, or *Dholes* (small Native-Drums), with their long, horny fingers; and blowing indescribable noises from shrill-squeaky-toned pipes, shaped somewhat like a clarionet. These,—with the addition of their continually clashing some small, but most irritatingly noisy cymbals, make up such an everlasting, ear-splitting and demoniac row, as proves

almost maddening in its intensity to unaccustomed European ears.

The Nautch-ke-Wállees, are generally dressed in the most gaudy manner that their luxuriant Eastern taste,—fertile in conceptions of this kind,—can possibly invent. Their long black hair either falls over their shoulders in loose flowing ringlets, or is braided and plaited—sometimes hanging, sometimes turned up—and always adorned with wreaths of strongly-scented flowers—generally the sweet, though pungently smelling *chemérie-phule*, a very strongly perfumed flower of the Jessamine kind. Then, if rich, as they often are—they are bedizened with jewels—pearls, diamonds, rubies and turquoise (a favourite Oriental stone) in the form of bangles for wrists, arms and *ankles*;—finger-rings—ear-rings and—nose-rings!—On their wrists, arms and ankles; they have not merely one, but many bangles, whose tinkling also mark the time of their steps at every movement they make. These bangles, *choories*, or bracelets,—with their necklaces;—*angooties* (finger-rings)—*náknies* (nose-rings)—and *goolchies* (ear-rings)—are all as brilliant as possible with valuable precious stones. Indeed, even the very peculiar and *outré* effect of the "Nauk-nee" (nose-jewel) is made attractive—sometimes even pleasing—by the brilliancy and

value of the jewels, though still more so when worn by a really beautiful—and there are some very lovely—*though* dark—Nautch-Wállees.—“Qui-Hye”—now a very steady “old foggy,” who never goes to Nautches—has indeed often seen many Native Ladies—not always of the class of Nautch-Wállees,—the effect of whose undoubted beauty, has been certainly heightened by the addition of a—perhaps, *bizarre*—really coquettish, tiny, little gold *Náknee* (nose-ornament) set with pearls, diamonds, and turquoises. Truly—the silvery pearl—the cerulean coloured turquoise—and the brilliantly flashing diamond, however strange it may appear—only added to the charming effect of the dark-complexioned, lovely woman.

Nautch-Wállees are, however, not always *Khoob-soorut* (beautiful). Some are merely the possessors of finely-formed and well-proportioned figures; or are—according to Oriental notions—graceful *Nautchnees*—dancers. Now, all admirers of French or Italian ballôts—with their Filles-de-Ballet, Coryphées, Figurantes, and Première-Danseuses—must be informed that these *soi-disant* “dancers,” never do really dance at all. Certainly not according to our notions and ideas of dancing in Europe. At all events, they do not dance anything like the

Italian, French, Spanish, or English Ballet Dancers. They merely advance—recede—languidly--languishingly,—gliding, with short sliding steps,—the feet never lifted from the ground. This—to all but the Native Hindoo or Mohammedan, who never tire of this, their chief recreation and delight—soon becomes most monotonous and wearisome,—as it is—to us Westerns—really tiresome and insipid.

The Native Nautch, given by a Rájah—great or petty—wealthy Báboo, or other Native Hindoo or Mohammedan notability, is simply a continuous roar of piping, squeeching, squeaking, yelling,—the “musicians” always yell, shout and scream—*tom-tom* beating—clashing of cymbals and clapping of hands!—Be it remembered, this “clapping of hands” is not applause by the audience, but a forcible part of the performance by the vigorous and enthusiastic attendant musicians. The Rájahs, Báboos and others, with their crowd of friends, followers, and Nokurs, never intend—or deign—to applaud, or signify their pleasure or approval of the performance, however much they may like it. That would not, indeed, be consistent with Oriental etiquette. They, therefore, simply do nothing but recline, loll, or squat, impassively smoking their hookahs, and giving little or no evidence of any grati-

fication in the sensual, noisy, and often ungraceful exhibition; beyond, perhaps, an occasional grunt of "*Bèsh!*"—fine—at any more than usual voluptuous movement of an exceptionally "good" or pretty Nautchnee.

With the accompaniment of this horrid crashing noise, and the hardly less overpowering effect of the pungently scented "*chemérie-ke-phule*" bergamot and attar of roses; there is also the never-ceasing, ever-gliding, and glistening of the now advancing, —then receding—sleepy, dreamy, and voluptuous-looking movements of the scantily, gauzy, and transparently-draped figure of the brown or black-faced Nautch Dancer; who, if pretty—as is ordinarily the case—is as well rewarded for her exertions by "*Bukseesh*" (presents) from the European visitors, as by the Native gentlemen and others attending the Nautch.

Little—if any—attempts at concealment of the form of the Nautch-Wallee is made. When, however—as is sometimes the case—English or other European Ladies are invited; then, all this is most carefully altered. Then, the Nautch-Wallee is well covered with a "*Sáree*" (robe), that renders the exhibition modest as the most fastidious could wish. But—the ordinary Native Nautch—is, in every respect, *toute au contraire*. At these, little indeed is

left to the imagination, and the gestures and movements of the Nautchnees, are suggestive to a degree.

To still more add to the attraction of their charms, they heighten the lustre of their complexions and brilliancy of their eyes, by tracing black circles round them, with a small camel-hair brush dipped in the powder of antimony. Besides this, and beyond the ordinary, and extraordinary, jewels mentioned, they hang little tinkling bells of silver or gold to their ankles, giving an extra *soupgon* of piquancy to their movements!

Of course, there are many different kinds, classes, and grades of Dancing-girls. Some are so renowned for beauty of face, and grace of form, that they continually are sought after and engaged by those Rájahs and others, who spare no expense—however great and extravagant—to gratify the indulgence of their inclinations. These Nautch-ke-Wáleees are, of course, the *Ránees* (Queens) and the *Máharánees* (Empresses) of the "Nautchneelogue." They are, indeed, the aristocrats, the *crème de la crème* of the Native Dancing Girls. Then there are others, not so expensive or *exigeant*; but at the same time, not so pleasing—not so enticing. In some parts of the East, the native hired Dancers are called "Bayáderes."

In point of extravagance—these Oriental, cream or coffee-coloured, beauties, who rejoice in such endearing names as "*Mohtee Jehán*" ("Pearl of my soul"), and "*Dhill Khoosee*" ("Hearts' delight"); are truly quite as luxurious and capricious in their demands and expectations, as any of the gay, glittering "*cocottes*" and "*lorettes*" of the Boulevards or Bois-de-Boulogne of Paris; or the equally fair Brougham-driving members of the *demi-monde*, so prevalent in the mysteriously quiet regions of our St. John's Wood. Indeed, in the matter of mere wanton wilful extravagance, our Eastern Dancing-girl—Nautch-Wallee—Mohtee-Jehán—or Dhill-Khoosee, will vie with any of the gay, sparkling, lavishly spending Demoiselles Louise, Therèse, or Valérie; or any "Mrs. Montgomerie," Miss Stuart, Miss Montmorency, or any other *soi-disant* aristocratically-named London "Lady."

As before mentioned, these Eastern "Dancing" Girls do not bound, twirl, or make *pirouettes* like our European Ballét Dancers. No! they hardly lift their feet from off the ground. All they do, is to express, by mute and languid action, those raptures and fondness which are here banished from all public meetings. A Nautch-Wallee's pantomimic action is, however, better imagined than described. Only the very gross materialism

of the Rájahs, Náwaubs, and Báboos of the far-away East—who are nothing if they are not sensual—would find pleasure or gratification in such exhibitions as the real East Indian Nautch. For, indeed, their languishing, wanton—nay, highly immodest—attitudes and movements ; are nearly always accompanied by songs in Hindoostanee or Bengalee—sometimes expressing courtship—sometimes jealousy — or “ solicitation ; ” but nearly always of a most loose and voluptuous tendency. These Native “ Gheet ” (songs) are sung to the same *tune* they accompany the dancing—or posturing—with. And so—they go on dancing, singing, gliding, *tom-tom* beating, cymbal clashing, hand clapping ; until at last, the Nautchnee being wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement, by the exercise, heat, strength of the overpowering pungent perfumes, constantly scattered over the room and all the visitors ; she sinks—or seems to sink—under the accumulated fascination, or fatigue ; her voice dies away, and she remains, for a time, exhausted and motionless. When this climax arrives,—the half-fainting Nautch-Wállee is replaced by another, who goes through the same sort of dances, movements, attitudes, gestures, and songs to amuse their audience, who, truly, never seem to be tired : though they seldom, if ever, express

any pleasure they may experience at the really extraordinary exhibition.

It must be this habit of seeing "Dancing" performed only by very low-charactered hirelings, that causes the Native Princes, Nobles and Gentlemen to feel such unqualified surprise at witnessing our social Assemblies and Balls. They can seldom, if ever, appreciate or even understand how it is that we choose to undergo the "fatigue and labour" of dancing ourselves, when, as they so naïvely remark, we could "have it done for us, so much easier" by hired dancers. The pleasure in or of Dancing they cannot anyway see. Of course, the great intercourse of later years has done much to alter many of their ideas in this matter. But still, it is very questionable if there is not, even now, a large amount of contempt in their minds at our doing—what is, to Oriental minds—anything so utterly derogatory as Dancing! How much more is this so, when we dance at our Balls with our lady friends and relations; our wives, daughters and sisters; whom, to their minds, it is a profanation of the most shameful kind, to be even glanced at by strangers. Knowing this feeling is so deeply imbued in the mind of all and every class of Natives,—whether Hindoo or Mohammedan,—there are many of our English Ladies in India who have great and

decided objections to be present or to dance at any Balls where Natives are invited. "Qui-Hye" well remembers instances where English Ladies of position in Calcutta have very strongly objected to Native gentlemen attending any of the meetings of their Amateur Philharmonic, or Choral Societies. Our friend, Ernstein, the professional Conductor of these musical Soirées, was, indeed, once awfully non-plussed by a most awkward *contre-temps* of this kind cropping up.

It was the pleasant custom of these Amateur ladies and gentlemen to occasionally give Ernstein, in addition to his ordinary *honorarium*, a Concert for his especial benefit. On the particular occasion in question, the Concert was to take place at the residence of Lady and Sir Barnaby Henning,—the then Lord Chief Justice of Bengal,—who were good and kind friends and patrons of Ernstein. As usual, all the performers were to be of the highest social position in Calcutta. There was that prominent and amiable member of the Amateur Choral Society, Dr. Herbert, the able Master of the Mint, our excellent baritone, who, good-looking and active as ever, always came out on such occasions with his small neatly-cut black whiskers, as well curled as in the old days of his being surgeon of Colonel Blood's Battery of the *Hon. Company's Bengal*

Horse Artillery. Then there was Lanstrover, with his sweet, though rather weak, tenor voice; and Seigler, — of Seigler, Gunz and Bunzimer, the princely German Merchants,—the burly basso-profundo, with his famous Lied “Zwanzig Tausend Teufels”; and our dear charming Lady Semplar—née Bessie Trant, you know,—with the grand *prononcé*, handkerchief-carrying Hon. Mrs. Montpelier; and the really lovely brunette, Miss De Parlent. Besides these, we had the great-guns and big-wigs, musically, politically and socially—Sir George Deerhurst, with his Contra-basso, and Sir Edward Cecil with his Fagotto (Bassoon); and last but not least—our dear good old friends, J. Tessington Rawputs, the Junior Magistrate, and Darke, of the Treasury. There were, of course, many others, generally all of the thickest possible *crème-de-la-crème* of the *haute-Société* in the “City of Palaces,”

Well, all these good, kind and excellent members of the Philharmonic and Choral Societies, whose high position alone was enough to ensure Ernstein’s Concert being a bumper and real benefit, had attended rehearsals with full orchestra and chorus—all amateurs—and many smaller practice meetings. Everything was ready, subscription books full of valuable autographs, tickets out, everyone on the *qui vive* for the musical event of the

Calcutta season ; when one day, like a thunder-bolt, came a little *chit* (note) to Ernstein, from Mrs. Toxophile, the lady Hon. Sec. of the Choral Society, saying that she and many of the ladies had " observed with pain and alarm, that there were some names of native gentlemen amongst the subscribers to his Concert ; and, considering *their* peculiar ideas of ' Singers,' the Lady Amateurs could not permit themselves to sing in those ' persons' presence, and Mrs. Toxophile must beg Mr. Ernstein to take steps to alter it," &c., &c. This was, indeed, a regular poser to poor Ernstein. For, though the little billet, or " chitty " as notes are called in India, was sweetly, amiably expressed, and written in a beautiful hand-writing—as all Mrs. Toxophile's letters were ;—still, under the soft silk was the firm hard steel-grip, which Ernstein knew too well to slight, or attempt to pass over. Here was a quandary and puzzle, with a vengeance ! Well, he immediately posted off to dear, kind Lady Henning, explaining everything to her, saying how ruinous it would be to him to do anything—at the last moment too—to offend any of the Native Magnates, who had so kindly taken tickets for his Concert. And he also hinted how it might be more than awkward—nay, mischievous to hurt the *amour propre* of these gentlemen. In the end, good Lady

Henning managed the awkward matter—arranged with Mrs. Toxophile, Lady Semplar, Hon. Mrs. “Monty,” and the other dear ladies—“made the rough places smooth”—and so tided over a difficulty that, at one time, threatened to overwhelm our musical arrangements with a social avalanche. It was all arranged at last. Everything went off with *éclat*. Few of the great Natives put in an appearance. They don’t care much about *our* music. They don’t believe in it. Had it been an assemblage of Nautch-ke-Wállees. Ah! that would have been “bésh” (fine) plenty of “*ahghoon*” (fire) there. They don’t want any of our classical “*tunder*” (cold) correct music. No! on the contrary they like to lie and loll about on their *morahs* (cushions)—smoke their jewelled “*hookahs*”—be sprinkled with *attar*—strewn over with *Chemérie-ke-phule*—and thus, at their perfect ease, fully enjoy the languid, languishing, though fervid *expressive* attitudes, gestures, signs and movements of their dusky, but pretty, hired beauties—*Mohtee-Jehan*, or *Dhill-Khoosee*.

L'ENVOI.

THUS concludes this series of Qui Hye's jottings and recollections. In the event of their possible success, a continuation of them is contemplated. The field is certainly large and varied, and embraces subjects of great general interest, such as, Native Poojá's (Festivals), — Mofussil or “ Up-country ” Stations, — Native Bázars, — Pálkees and Pálkee-Bairá's, — Chokedás and Pára-wállas (Indian Police)—Simla, Dugshaie, Subáthoo, and Kussolie, the Stations in the Hymálayá Mountains,—Affghans and Sikhs,—the Punjáb and Affghanistan,—Thugs and Thuggee,—Native Princes, Nobles, and Gentry,—the Máharájas, Rájas, Náwábs, Moolvies, and Bábus,—the Irregular Cavalry and Infantry of the Native Indian Army, &c., &c.

For the present, however, Qui Hye can only offer his grateful thanks for the generous appreciation and powerful support he has so readily received for these slight and desultory reminiscences of his old Indian experiences.

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OF A

BENGAL "QUI HYE!"

BY

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DEDICATED (BY PERMISSION) TO

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